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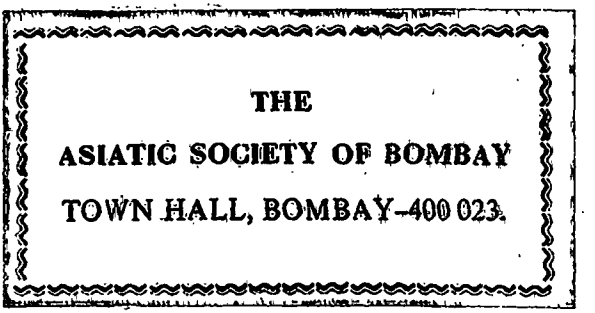

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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY:

INCLUDING VARIOUS ADDITIONAL PIECES FROM MS. AND OTHER SOURCES.

45 5

THE TEXT CAREFULLY REVISED, WITH NOTES AND

A MEMOIR,

46828

BY

WILLIAM MICHAEL ROSSETTI.

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2

CONTENTS.

PAGE

PETER BELL THE THIRD (1819)—

Dedication to Thomas Brown the Younger . . . 1

Prologue . . . 2

Part I.—Death . . . 3

" II.—The Devil . . . 6

" III.—Hell . . . 8

" IV.—Sin . . . 12

" V.—Grace . . . 15

" VI.—Damnation . . . 18

" VII.—Double Damnation . . . 24

Shelley's Notes . . . 28

Note by Mrs. Shelley . . . 30

[illegible] TYRANNUS, SWELLFOOT THE TYRANT (1820)—

Advertisement . . . 1

Act I. . . . 2

" II. . . . 17

Shelley's Notes . . . 32

Note by Mrs. Shelley . . . 34

THE WITCH OF ATLAS (1820)—

To Mary . . . 35

PAGE

Epipsychidion (1820)—
Advertisement 75
Epipsychidion 76

Adonais: an Elegy on the Death of John Keats (1821)—
Preface 87
Adonais 91

Hellas (1821)—
Preface 107
Hellas 109
Shelley's Notes 139
Note by Mrs. Shelley 143

SECTION II.—MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Early Poems—
To Coleridge 143
Sonnet (April 1814) 144
Mutability (We are as clouds that veil the midnight moon) 145
Mutability (The pale, the cold, and the moony smile) 145
On Death (The pale, the cold, and the moony smile) 146
To Ianthe 147
To Wordsworth 148
Feelings of a Republican on the Fall of Bonaparte 149
Lines (The cold earth slept below) 149
Note by Mrs. Shelley 150

Poems written in 1816—
The Sunset 151
Hymn to Intellectual Beauty 151
The Moon 153
Note by Mrs. Shelley 154

PAGE

[illegible] WRITTEN IN 1817—

Marianne's Dream 138
"Death (They die—the dead return not. Misery) 163
To Constantia, Singing 163
Sonnet, Ozymandias 164
To the Lord Chancellor 165
To William Shelley (The billows on the beach are leaping around it) 167
Lines ("That time is dead for ever, child) 169
On Fanny Godwin 169
Lines to a Critic 169
Note by Mrs. Shelley 170

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1818—

Passage of the Apennines 171
On a Dead Violet 172
The Past 173
Sonnet (Lift not the painted veil which those who live) 173
Lines written among the Euganean Hills 173
Stanzas written in Dejection near Naples 178
Misery 184
Note by Mrs. Shelley 186

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1819—

The Masque of Anarchy 187
Lines written during the Castlereagh Administration 189
Song To the Men of England 190
England in 1819 190
Similes for Two Political Characters of 1819 191
God Save the Queen 191
An Ode to the Asserters of Liberty 192
Ode to Heaven 193
Ode to the West Wind 197
An Exhortation 199
The Indian Serenade 201
Lines written for Miss Sophia Stacey 202
[illegible]'s Song 202
Note by Mrs. Shelley 203

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1820—
Love's Philosophy
Ode to Liberty
Arethusa
Hymn of Apollo
Hymn of Pan
The Question
The Sensitive Plant
The Cloud
To a Skylark
To —— (I fear thy kisses, gentle maiden)
The Two Spirits, an Allegory
Song of Proserpine
Letter to Maria Gisborne
Ode to Naples
Summer and Winter
Lines to a Reviewer
Autumn, a Dirge
Liberty
The Tower of Famine
Good Night
Time Long Past
Sonnet (Ye hasten to the dead: what seek ye there)
Shelley's Notes
Note by Mrs. Shelley

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1821—
Dirge for the Year
To Night
From the Arabic, an Imitation
To Emilia Viviani
Time
Lines (Far, far away, O ye)
The Fugitives
To —— (Music, when soft voices die)
To —— (Rarely, rarely, comest thou)
Lines written on hearing the news of the Death of Napoleon
Mutability (The flower that smiles to-day)

PAGE

Stanzas, Polidori Greatness 270
Lines (I C walk in autumn's even) 272
To-morrow 273
The Aziola 273
A Lament 274
Remembrance 274
To Edward Williams 275
To —— (One word is too often profaned) 276
To —— (When passion's trance is overpast) 277
A Bridal Song 277
Note by Mrs. Shelley 278

Poems written in 1822—

The Magnetic Lady to her Patient 280
Lines (When the lamp is shattered) 281
To Jane—the Invitation 282
To Jane—the Recollection 284
With a Guitar, to Jane 285
A Dirge 286
To Jane (The keen stars were twinkling) 286
Lines written in the Bay of Lerici 289
Epitaph 290
Note by Mrs. Shelley 291

SECTION III.—FRAGMENTS

1. To —— (Thy dewy looks sink in my heart, 181[illegible]) 295
2. To Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin 296
3. To —— (Yet look on me—[illegible] not [illegible] eyes away) 297
4. Dear home, thou scene of earliest hopes and joys (1816) 298
5. A shovel of his ashes took 299
6. Those whom nor power, nor lying faith, nor [illegible] (1817) 300
7. For me, my friend, if not that tears did tremble 301

PAGE

8. Once more descend
9. Oh that a chariot of cloud were mine
10. A golden-winged angel stood
11. Prince Athanase
12. To Constantia
13. No, Music, thou art not the God of Love
14. Music (The silver key of the fountain of tears)
15. To thirst, and find no fill—to will, and wander
16. Wealth and dominion fade into the mass
17. My thoughts arise and fade in solitude
18. Ode
19. To Mary Shelley (1818)
20. The Woodman and the Nightingale
21. O mighty mind, in whose deep stream this rose
22. Silence! Oh well are Death and Sleep and Thou
23. The fierce beasts of the woods and wildernesses
24. My head is wild with weeping for a grief
25. Flourishing vine whose kindling clusters grow
26. Scene from Tasso—Song for Tasso
27. Marenghi
28. Follow to the deep wood's weeds (1819)
29. At the creation of the earth
30. And who feels the spirit near
31. A gentle story of two lovers young
32. I am drunk with the honey wine
33. Ye gentle visitations of calm thought
34. The world is dreary
35. To William Shelley (Thy little footsteps on the sands)
36. To William Shelley (My lost William, thou in whom)
37. My dearest Mary, wherefore hast thou gone
38. When a lover clasps his fairest
39. One sweet of the Seven of the tale untold
40. And ... here is ... (To ... for such as thee)
41. In the cave which, wild and deep
42. There is a voice still gentle ... sphere
43. How ... it is ... and ... the tale
44. What ... gain ... thou ... they ... gone
45. Wake ... forget ... not—hear ...

PAGE

45. Rome has fallen, ye see it lying 324
47. The fitful alternations of the rain 324
[illegible]. On the Medusa of Leonardo da Vinci 324
49. People of England! ye who toil and groan 324
50. I am a spirit who has dwelt 327
51. Is not to-day enough? why do I peer 326
[illegible]. Is it that in some brighter sphere 326
53. As the sunrise to the night 326
54. Such hope as is the sick despair of good (1820) 326
55. My head is heavy, my limbs are weary 327
56. A Vision of the Sea 327
57. The Waning Moon 327
58. Death [illegible] is here, and death is there) 328
59. The World's Wanderers 329
60. Orpheus 329
61. To his Genius 333
62. Fiordispina 336
63. To the Moon 339
64. Dazzling splendour of the brightest sun 341
65. An Allegory 342
66. I went into the deserts of dim sleep 342
67. The viewless and invisible consequence 343
68. I dreamed that Milton's spirit rose and took 343
69. His face was like a snake's—wrinkled and loose 343
70. The gentleness of rain was in the wind 343
[illegible]. [illegible] was a lull in the crowd (1821) 343
[illegible]. Love, Hope, Desire, and Fear 343
[illegible]. From all to Hell 343
[illegible]. I would not be a King—Enough 345
[illegible]. O thou immortal deity 350
[illegible]. He wanders, like a day-appearing dream 350
77. On Keats 350
[illegible]. The rude wind is singing 351
[illegible]. What art thou, prognosticator, Time 351
[illegible]. Whence I wonder and every day 351
[illegible]. The babe is at peace within the womb 351
[illegible] 351
[illegible]. Ponte al Mare, Pisa 353
357

PAGE

84. The Boat on the Serchio 358
85. Music (I pant for the music which is divine) 361
86. Sonnet to Byron 362
87. I faint, I perish with my love! I grow 362
88. Great Spirit whom the sea of boundless thought 362
89. Faint with love the Lady of the South 363
90. Come, thou awakener of the spirit's ocean 363
91. The Zucca (1822) 364
92. The Isle 365
93. Fragments of an unfinished Drama 366
94. Charles the First 370
95. Lines (We meet not as we parted) 375
96. Bright wanderer, fair coquette of heaven 375
97. The Triumph of Life 376
Shelley's Note 411

SECTION IV.—TRANSLATIONS.

Hymns of Homer—

Hymn to Mercury (July 1820) 411
To Venus (1818) 433
To Castor and Pollux 434
To Minerva 435
To the Sun 436
To the Moon 436
To the Earth, Mother of all 437

The Cyclops, a Satyric Drama, from Euripides (1819) 438

Fragments from the Greek—

1. Sylph of Plato 457
2. A man who was about to hang himself 457
[illegible] 457
[illegible], together 457
From [illegible]
[illegible] 458
[illegible] 458

PAGE

From Virgil.—The Tenth Eclogue 458

From Dante—

Dante Allighieri to Guido Cavalcanti—sonnet (1816) . . . 479
The First Canzone of the Convito (1820) 459
Matilda Gathering Flowers (1820) 461

Scenes from the Magico Prodigioso of Calderon (1822) . . . 463

Scenes from the Faust of Göthe (1822) 482

Shelley's Notes 496

SECTION V.—APPENDIX.

Verses on a Cat 498
Fragment (Hark! the owlet flaps his wings, 1807) 499
Latin Verses: The Epitaph in Gray's Elegy, (1808) 499
" In Horologium 500
Victoria 500
Sister Rosa 501
The Lake-Storm 504
Bereavement 505
Fading (1809) 505
The Wandering Jew 505
St Irvyne's Tower 506
The Father's Spectre 506
The Solitary (1810) 507
Death, a Dialogue 507
[illegible] Vanquished 508

Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson—

Advertisement 509
Fragment, supposed to be an Epithalamium of Francis Ravaillac and Charlotte Corday 511
Despair 513
Fragment (Yes, all is past! Swift time has fled away) . . . 514
The Spectral Horseman 516
Melody to a Scene of Former Times 517
[illegible] 518

PAGE

The Tear (1821) 517
Love 521
Bigotry's Victim 522
To the Moonbeam 523
On a Fête at Carlton House (Fragment) 523
To —— (O thou) 525
To a Star 524
Love's Rose 524
To Mary, who Died in this Opinion 525
Mother and Son (1820) 526
The Mexican Revolution 528
To Ireland 529
Eyes 530
The Daemon of the World, Conclusion (1817) 530
Mont Blanc (Cancelled Passage, 1816) 534
Singing (1817) 535
A Hate-Song (Improvised) 537
To William Shelley (Cancelled Passages) 537
Julian and Maddalo (Fragments, 1818) 538
Prometheus Unbound (Variation, 1817) 539
Ode to Liberty (Cancelled Passage, 1820) 539
Epipsychidion (Cancelled Passages) 534
To Emilia Viviani (Commencement of a Second Stanza, 1821) 539
From Calderon's Cisma d'Ingalaterra (by Medwin and Shelley) 539
Ugolino, from Dante (by Medwin and Shelley) 536
Epithalamium (Variation of the Bridal Song) 537
The same (another version) 538
Buona Notte 539
Edwards (Fragments) 540
[illegible] 541
[illegible] (Lines apparently belonging to that Poem) 541
[illegible] (Cancelled Passage, 1821) 542
[illegible] 543

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

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OF

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

PETER BELL THE THIRD.

BY MICHING MALLECHO ESQ.

Is it a party in a parlour,
Crammed just as they on earth were crammed,
Some sipping punch—some sipping tea,
But, as you by their faces see,
All silent, and all——damned?

Peter Bell, by W. WORDSWORTH.

OPHELIA.—What means this, my lord?
HAMLET.—Marry, this is Miching Mallecho; it means mischief.

SHAKSPEARE.

DEDICATION.

TO THOMAS BROWN ESQ. THE YOUNGER, H.F.

DEAR TOM,—Allow me to request you to introduce Mr. Peter Bell to the respectable family of the Fudges. Although he may fall short of those very considerable personages in the more active properties which characterize the Rat and the Apostate, I suspect that even you, their historian, will confess that he surpasses them in the more peculiarly legitimate qualification of intolerable dullness.

You know Mr. Examiner Hunt; well—it was he who presented me to two of the Mr. Bells. My intimacy with the younger Mr. Bell naturally sprung from this introduction to his brothers. And, in presenting him to you, I have the satisfaction of being able to assure you that he is considerably the dullest of the three.

There is this particular advantage in an acquaintance with any one of the Peter Bells—that, if you know one Peter Bell, you know three Peter Bells: they are not one, but three; not three, but one. An awful mystery, which, after having caused torrents of blood, and having been hymned by groans enough to deafen the music of the spheres, is at length illustrated, to the satisfaction of all parties in the theological world, by the nature of Mr. Peter Bell.

Peter is a polyhedric Peter, or a Peter with many sides. He changes colours like a chameleon, and his coat like a snake. He is a Proteus of a Peter. He was at first

sublime, pathetic, impressive, profound; then dull; then prosy and dull; and now dull—*oh so very dull!* it is an ultra-legitimate dullness.

You will perceive that it is not necessary to consider Hell and the Devil as supernatural machinery. The whole scene of my epic is in "this world which is"—so Peter informed us before his conversion to *White Obi*——

"——The world of all of us, *and where*
We find our happiness, or not at all."

Let me observe that I have spent six or seven days in composing this sublime piece; the orb of my moonlight genius has made the fourth part of its revolution round the dull earth which you inhabit, driving you mad, while it has retained its calmness and its splendour, and I have been fitting this its last phase "to occupy a permanent station in the literature of my country."

Your works, indeed, dear Tom, sell better; but mine are far superior. The public is no judge; posterity sets all to rights.

Allow me to observe that so much has been written of Peter Bell that the present history can be considered only, like the *Iliad*, as a continuation of that series of cyclic poems which have already been candidates for bestowing immortality upon, at the same time that they receive it from, his character and adventures. In this point of view, I have violated no rule of syntax in beginning my composition with a conjunction! the full stop which closes the poem continued by me being, like the full stops at the end of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, a full stop of a very qualified import.

Hoping that the immortality which you have given to the Fudges you will receive from them; and in the firm expectation that, when London shall be an habitation of bitterns; when St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey shall stand, shapeless and nameless ruins, in the midst of an unpeopled marsh; when the piers of Waterloo Bridge shall become the nuclei of islets of reeds and osiers, and cast the jagged shadows of their broken arches on the solitary stream; some transatlantic commentator will be weighing, in the scales of some new and now unimagined system of criticism, the respective merits of the Bells and the Fudges, and their historians,

I remain, dear Tom,

Yours sincerely,

MICHING MALLECHO.

December 1, 1819.

P.S.—Pray excuse the date of place; so soon as the profits of the publication come in, I mean to hire lodgings in a more respectable street.

PROLOGUE.

PETER BELLS, one, two, and three,
O'er the wide world wandering be.—
First, the antenatal Peter,
Wrapped in weeds of the same metre,
The so long predestined raiment,
Clothed in which to walk his way meant
The second Peter; whose ambition
Is to link the proposition
As the mean of two extremes—

(This was learnt from Aldrich's themes)
Shielding from the guilt of schism
The orthodoxal syllogism;
The first Peter—he who was
Like the shadow in the glass
Of the second, yet unripe,
His substantial antitype.—
Then came Peter Bell the Second,
Who henceforward must be reckoned
The body of a double soul,
And that portion of the whole
Without which the rest would seem
Ends of a disjointed dream.—
And the Third is he who has
O'er the grave been forced to pass
To the other side, which is—
Go and try else—just like this.

Peter Bell the First was Peter
Smugger, milder, softer, neater,
Like the soul before it is
Born from that world into this.
The next Peter Bell was he
Predevote, like you and me,
To good or evil as may come;
His was the severer doom,—
For he was an evil cotter,
And a polygamic Potter.
And the last is Peter Bell
Damned since our first parents fell,
Damned eternally to Hell—
Surely he deserves it well!

PART I.—DEATH.

I.

AND Peter Bell, when he had been
With fresh-imported hell-fire warmed,
Grew serious—from his dress and mien
'Twas very plainly to be seen
Peter was quite reformed.

II.

His eyes turned up, his mouth turned down;
His accent caught a nasal twang;
He oiled his hair; there might be heard
The grace of God in every word
Which Peter said or sang.

III.

But Peter now grew old, and had
An ill no doctor could unravel;
His torments almost drove him mad;—
Some said it was a fever bad,
Some swore it was the gravel.

IV.

His holy friends then came about,
And with long preaching and persuasion
Convinced the patient that, without
The smallest shadow of a doubt,
He was predestined to damnation.

V.

They said: "Thy name is Peter *Bell*,
Thy skin is of a brimstone *hue;*
Alive or dead—ay, sick or well—
The one God made to rhyme with *hell;*
The other, I think, rhymes with *you.*"

VI.

Then Peter set up such a yell
The nurse, who with some water gruel
Was climbing up the stairs as well
As her old legs could climb them, fell,
And broke them both—the fall was cruel.

VII.

The parson from the casement leapt
Into the lake of Windermere:
And many an eel—though no adept
In God's right reason for it—kept
Gnawing his kidneys half a year.

VIII.

And all the rest rushed through the door,
And tumbled over one another,

And broke their skulls.—Upon the floor
Meanwhile sat Peter Bell, and swore,
And cursed his father and his mother;

IX.

And raved of God and sin and death,
Blaspheming like an infidel;
And said that with his clenchèd teeth
He'd seize the earth from underneath,
And drag it with him down to hell.

X.

As he was speaking, came a spasm,
And wrenched his gnashing teeth asunder.
Like one who sees a strange phantasm
He lay,—there was a silent chasm
Betwixt his upper jaw and under.

XI.

And yellow death lay on his face;
And a fixed smile that was not human
Told, as I understand the case,
That he was gone to the wrong place:—
I heard all this from the old woman.

XII.

Then there came down from Langdale Pike
A cloud, with lightning, wind, and hail;
It swept over the mountains like
An ocean, and I heard it strike
The woods and crags of Grasmere Vale.

XIII.

And I saw the black storm come
Nearer, minute after minute;
Its thunder made the cataracts dumb;
With hiss and clash and hollow hum,
It neared as if the Devil was in it.

XIV.

The Devil *was* in it:—he had bought
Peter for half-a-crown. And, when
The storm which bore him vanished, nought
That in the house that storm had caught
Was ever seen again.

XV.

The gaping neighbours came next day—
They found all vanished from the shore.
The bible whence he used to pray
Half scorched under a hen-coop lay;
Smashed glass—and nothing more.

PART II.—THE DEVIL.

I.

THE DEVIL, I safely can aver,
Has neither hoof nor tail nor sting;
Nor is he, as some sages swear,
A spirit neither here nor there,—
In nothing, yet in everything.

II.

He is—what we are: for sometimes
The Devil is a gentleman;
At others a bard bartering rhymes
For sack; a statesman spinning crimes;
A swindler living as he can;

III.

A thief who cometh in the night,
With whole boots and net pantaloons,
Like some one whom it were not right
To mention; or the luckless wight
From whom he steals nine silver spoons.

IV.

But in this case he did appear
Like a slop-merchant from Wapping,
And with smug face and eye severe
On every side did perk and peer
Till he saw Peter dead or napping.

V.

He had on an upper Benjamin
(For he was of the driving schism)
In the which he wrapped his skin
From the storm he travelled in,
For fear of rheumatism.

VI.

He called the ghost out of the corse.
It was exceedingly like Peter,—
Only its voice was hollow and hoarse:
It had a queerish look of course:
Its dress too was a little neater.

VII.

The Devil knew not his name and lot,
Peter knew not that he was Bell:
Each had an upper stream of thought
Which made all seem as it was not,
Fitting itself to all things well.

VIII.

Peter thought he had parents dear,
Brothers, sisters, cousins, cronies,
In the fens of Lincolnshire.
He perhaps had found them there,
Had he gone and boldly shown his

IX.

Solemn phiz in his own village;
Where he thought oft when a boy
He'd clomb the orchard walls to pillage
The produce of his neighbour's tillage,
With marvellous pride and joy.

X.

And the Devil thought he had,
'Mid the misery and confusion
Of an unjust war, just made
A fortune by the gainful trade
Of giving soldiers rations bad—
(The world is full of strange delusion);

XI.

That he had a mansion planned
In a square like Grosvenor Square;
That he was aping fashion, and
That he now came to Westmoreland
To see what was romantic there.

XII.

And all this, though quite ideal—
Ready at a breath to vanish—

Was a state not more unreal
Than the peace he could not feel,
Or the care he could not banish.

XIII.

After a little conversation,
The Devil told Peter, if he chose,
He'd bring him to the world of fashion
By giving him a situation
In his own service—and new clothes.

XIV.

And Peter bowed, quite pleased and proud;
And, after waiting some few days
For a new livery—dirty yellow
Turned up with black,—the wretched fellow
Was bowled to Hell in the Devil's chaise.

PART III.—HELL.

I.

HELL is a city much like London—
A populous and a smoky city;
There are all sorts of people undone,
And there is little or no fun done;
Small justice shown, and still less pity.

II.

There is a Castles, and a Canning,
A Cobbett, and a Castlereagh;
All sorts of caitiff corpses planning
All sorts of cozening, for trepanning
Corpses less corrupt than they.

III.

There is a * * *, who has lost
His wits, or sold them, none knows which;
He walks about a double ghost,
And, though as thin as Fraud almost,
Ever grows more grim and rich.

IV.

There is a Chancery Court; a King;
A manufacturing mob; a set

Of thieves who by themselves are sent
Similar thieves to represent;
An army; and a public debt:—

V.

Which last is a scheme of paper-money,
And means, being interpreted—
"Bees, keep your wax—give us the honey;
And we will plant, while skies are sunny,
Flowers, which in winter serve instead."

VI.

There is great talk of revolution,
And a great chance of despotism;
German soldiers—camps—confusion—
Tumults—lotteries—rage—delusion—
Gin—suicide—and Methodism:—

VII.

Taxes too on wine and bread,
And meat and beer and tea and cheese;
From which those patriots pure are fed
Who gorge, before they reel to bed,
The tenfold essence of all these.

VIII.

There are mincing women, mewing
(Like cats, who *amant miserè*)
Of their own virtue, and pursuing
Their gentler sisters to that ruin
Without which—what were chastity?

IX.

Lawyers, judges, old hobnobbers,
Are there,—bailiffs—Chancellors—
Bishops—great and little robbers—
Rhymesters—pamphleteers—stock-jobbers—
Men of glory in the wars,—

X.

Things whose trade is over ladies
To lean, and flirt and stare and simper,
Till all that is divine in woman
Grows cruel, courteous, smooth, inhuman,
Crucified 'twixt a smile and whimper.

XI.

Thrusting, toiling, wailing, moiling,
Frowning, preaching—such a riot!
Each with never-ceasing labour,
Whilst he thinks he cheats his neighbour,
Cheating his own heart of quiet.

XII.

And all these meet at levees,—
Dinners convivial and political—
Suppers of epic poets—teas
Where small-talk dies in agonies—
Breakfasts professional and critical;—

XIII.

Lunches and snacks so aldermanic
That one would furnish forth ten dinners,
Where reigns a Cretan-tongued panic,
Lest news—Russ, Dutch, or Alemannic—
Should make some losers, and some winners;—

XIV.

At conversazioni, balls,
Conventicles, and drawing-rooms;
Courts of law, committees, calls
Of a morning, clubs, book-stalls,
Churches, masquerades, and tombs.

XV.

And this is Hell: and in this smother
All are damnable and damned;
Each one, damning, damns the other;
They are damned by one another,—
By none other are they damned.

XVI.

'Tis a lie to say "God damns."
Where was Heaven's Attorney General
When they first gave out such flams?
Let there be an end of shams:
They are mines of poisonous mineral.

XVII.

Statesmen damn themselves to be
Cursed; and lawyers damn their souls

To the auction of a fee;
Churchmen damn themselves to see
God's sweet love in burning coals:—

XVIII.

The rich are damned, beyond all cure,
To taunt and starve and trample on
The weak and wretched; and the poor
Damn their broken hearts to endure
Stripe on stripe with groan on groan:—

XIX.

Sometimes the poor are damned indeed
To take—not means for being blessed—
But Cobbett's snuff, revenge; that weed
From which the worms that it doth feed
Squeeze less than they before possessed:—

XX.

And some few, like we know who,
Damned—but God alone knows why—
To believe their minds are given
To make this ugly Hell a Heaven;
In which faith they live and die.

XXI.

Thus,—as, in a town plague-stricken,
Each man (be he sound or no)
Must indifferently sicken;
As, when day begins to thicken,
None knows a pigeon from a crow,—

XXII.

So good and bad, sane and mad;
The oppressor and the oppressed;
Those who weep to see what others
Smile to inflict upon their brothers;
Lovers, haters, worst and best;

XXIII.

All are damned—They breathe an air,
Thick, infected, joy-dispelling;
Each pursues what seems most fair,
Mining like moles through mind, and there
Scoop palace-caverns vast, where Care
In thronèd state is ever dwelling.

PART IV.—SIN.

I.

Lo, Peter in Hell's Grosvenor Square,
A footman in the Devil's service!
And the misjudging world would swear
That every man in service there
To virtue would prefer vice.

II.

But Peter, though now damned, was not
What Peter was before damnation.
Men oftentimes prepare a lot
Which, ere it finds them, is not what
Suits with their genuine station.

III.

All things that Peter saw and felt
Had a peculiar aspect to him;
And, when they came within the belt
Of his own nature, seemed to melt,
Like cloud to cloud, into him.

IV.

And so, the outward world uniting
To that within him, he became
Considerably uninviting
To those who, meditation slighting,
Were moulded in a different frame.

V.

And he scorned them, and they scorned him:
And he scorned all they did; and they
Did all that men of their own trim
Are wont to do to please their whim,
Drinking, lying, swearing, play.

VI.

Such were his fellow-servants; thus
His virtue, like our own, was built
Too much on that indignant fuss
Hypocrite Pride stirs up in us
To bully out another's guilt.

VII.

He had a mind which was somehow
At once circumference and centre
Of all he might or feel or know;
Nothing went ever out, although
Something did ever enter.

VIII.

He had as much imagination
As a pint-pot;—he never could
Fancy another situation,
From which to dart his contemplation,
Than that wherein he stood.

IX.

Yet his was individual mind,
And new-created all he saw
In a new manner, and refined
Those new creations, and combined
Them by a master-spirit's law.

X.

Thus—although unimaginative—
An apprehension clear, intense,
Of his mind's work, had made alive
The things it wrought on; I believe
Wakening a sort of thought in sense.

XI.

But from the first 'twas Peter's drift
To be a kind of moral eunuch:
He touched the hem of Nature's shift,—
Felt faint,—and never dared uplift
The closest all-concealing tunic.

XII.

She laughed the while with an arch smile,
And kissed him with a sister's kiss,
And said: "My best Diogenes,
I love you well—but, if you please,
Tempt not again my deepest bliss.

XIII.

"'Tis you are cold; for I, not coy,
Yield love for love, frank, warm, and true;

And Burns, a Scottish peasant boy—
His errors prove it—knew my joy
More, learned friend, than you.

XIV.

"*Bocca baciata non perde ventura,*
Anzi rinnuova come fa la luna:—
So thought Boccaccio, whose sweet words might cure a
Male prude, like you, from what you now endure, a
Low-tide in soul, like a stagnant laguna."

XV.

Then Peter rubbed his eyes severe,
And smoothed his spacious forehead down
With his broad palm;—'twixt love and fear,
He looked, as he no doubt felt, queer,
And in his dream sate down.

XVI.

The Devil was no uncommon creature;
A leaden-witted thief—just huddled
Out of the dross and scum of nature;
A toad-like lump of limb and feature,
With mind and heart and fancy muddled.

XVII.

He was that heavy dull cold thing
The Spirit of Evil well may be:
A drone too base to have a sting;
Who gluts, and grimes his lazy wing,
And calls lust "luxury."

XVIII.

Now he was quite the kind of wight
Round whom collect, at a fixed era,
Venison, turtle, hock, and claret—
Good cheer, and those who come to share it—
And best East Indian madeira.

XIX.

It was his fancy to invite
Men of science, wit, and learning,
Who came to lend each other light;
He proudly thought that his gold's might
Had set those spirits burning.

XX.

And men of learning, science, wit,
Considered him as you and I
Think of some rotten tree, and sit
Lounging and dining under it,
Exposed to the wide sky.

XXI.

And all the while, with loose fat smile,
The willing wretch sat winking there;
Believing 'twas his power that made
That jovial scene, and that all paid
Homage to his unnoticed chair.

XXII.

Though to be sure this place was Hell;
He was the Devil; and all they—
What though the claret circled well,
And wit, like ocean, rose and fell?—
Were damned eternally.

PART V.—GRACE.

I.

AMONG the guests who often stayed
Till the Devil's petits-soupers,
A man there came, fair as a maid;
And Peter noted what he said,
Standing behind his master's chair.

II.

He was a mighty poet and
A subtle-souled psychologist;
All things he seemed to understand
Of old or new, of sea or land—
But his own mind, which was a mist.

III.

This was a man who might have turned
Hell into Heaven—and so in gladness
A Heaven unto himself have earned:
But he in shadows undiscerned
Trusted, and damned himself to madness.

IV.

He spoke of poetry, and how
Divine it was—"a light—a love—
A spirit which like wind doth blow
As it listeth, to and fro;
A dew rained down from God above;

V.

"A power which comes and goes like dream,
And which none can ever trace—
Heaven's light on earth—Truth's brightest beam."
And when he ceased there lay the gleam
Of those words upon his face.

VI.

Now Peter, when he heard such talk,
Would, heedless of a broken pate,
Stand like a man asleep, or baulk
Some wishing guest of knife or fork,
Or drop and break his master's plate.

VII.

At night he oft would start and wake
Like a lover, and began
In a wild measure songs to make
On moor and glen and rocky lake,
And on the heart of man;

VIII.

And on the universal sky—
And the wide earth's bosom green,—
And the sweet strange mystery
Of what beyond these things may lie,
And yet remain unseen.

IX.

For in his thought he visited
The spots in which, ere dead and damned,
He his wayward life had led;
Yet knew not whence the thoughts were fed
Which thus his fancy crammed.

X.

And these obscure remembrances
Stirred such harmony in Peter,

That, whensoever he should please,
He could speak of rocks and trees
In poetic metre.

XI.

For, though it was without a sense
Of memory, yet he remembered well
Many a ditch and quickset fence;
Of lakes he had intelligence;
He knew something of heath and fell.

XII.

He had also dim recollections
Of pedlars tramping on their rounds;
Milk-pans and pails; and odd collections
Of saws and proverbs; and reflections
Old parsons make in burying-grounds.

XIII.

But Peter's verse was clear, and came
Announcing, from the frozen hearth
Of a cold age, that none might tame
The soul of that diviner flame
It augured to the earth:—

XIV.

Like gentle rains on the dry plains,
Making that green which late was grey,
Or like the sudden moon that stains
Some gloomy chamber's window-panes
With a broad light like day.

XV.

For language was in Peter's hand
Like clay while he was yet a potter;
And he made songs for all the land
Sweet both to feel and understand,
As pipkins late to mountain cotter.

XVI.

And Mr. —— the bookseller
Gave twenty pounds for some. Then, scorning
A footman's yellow coat to wear,
Peter (too proud of heart, I fear)
Instantly gave the Devil warning.

XVII.

Whereat the Devil took offence,
And swore in his soul a great oath then
That for his damned impertinence
He 'd bring him to a proper sense
Of what was due to gentlemen!

PART VI.—DAMNATION.

I.

"Oh that mine enemy had written
A book!" cried Job:—a fearful curse,
If to the Arab, as the Briton,
'Twas galling to be critic-bitten:—
The Devil to Peter wished no worse.

II.

When Peter's next new book found vent,
The Devil to all the first Reviews
A copy of it slily sent,
With five-pound note as compliment,
And this short notice—"Pray abuse."

III.

Then *seriatim*, month and quarter,
Appeared such mad tirades!—One said:
"Peter seduced Mrs. Foy's daughter;
Then drowned the mother in Ullswater,
The last thing as he went to bed."

IV.

Another: "Let him shave his head.
Where's Dr. Willis?—Or is he joking?
What does the rascal mean or hope,
No longer imitating Pope,
In that barbarian Shakspeare poking?"

V.

One more: "Is incest not enough?
And must there be adultery too?

Grace after meat? Miscreant and liar!
Thief! blackguard! scoundrel! fool! Hell fire
Is twenty times too good for you.

VI.

"By that last book of yours WE think
You've double-damned yourself to scorn;
We warned you whilst yet on the brink
You stood. From your black name will shrink
The babe that is unborn."

VII.

All these Reviews the Devil made
Up in a parcel, which he had
Safely to Peter's house conveyed.
For carriage, ten-pence Peter paid—
Untied them—read them—went half mad.

VIII.

"What!" cried he, "this is my reward
For nights of thought, and days of toil?
Do poets, but to be abhorred
By men of whom they never heard,
Consume their spirits' oil?

IX.

"What have I done to them?—and who
Is Mrs. Foy? 'Tis very cruel
To speak of me and Betty so!
Adultery! God defend me! Oh!
I've half a mind to fight a duel.

X.

"Or," cried he, a grave look collecting,
"Is it my genius, like the moon,
Sets those who stand her face inspecting
That face within their brain reflecting,
Like a crazed bell-chime, out of tune?

XI.

For Peter did not know the town;
But thought, as country readers do,
For half a guinea or a crown
He bought oblivion or renown
From God's own voice in a review.

XII.

All Peter did on this occasion
Was writing some sad stuff in prose.
It is a dangerous invasion
When poets criticize; their station
Is to delight, not pose.

XIII.

The Devil then sent to Leipsic fair
For Born's translation of Kant's book;
A world of words, tail foremost, where
Right, wrong—false, true—and foul and fair—
As in a lottery-wheel are shook.

XIV.

Five thousand crammed octavo pages
Of German psychologics,—he
Who his *furor verborum* assuages
Thereon deserves just seven months' wages
More than will e'er be due to me.

XV.

I looked on them nine several days,
And then I saw that they were bad;
A friend, too, spoke in their dispraise,—
He never read them; with amaze
I found Sir William Drummond had.

XVI.

When the book came, the Devil sent
It to P. Verbovale Esquire,
With a brief note of compliment,
By that night's Carlisle mail. It went,
And set his soul on fire:—

XVII.

Fire which *ex luce præbens fumum*
Made him beyond the bottom see
Of truth's clear well. When I and you, Ma'am,
Go, as we shall do, *subter humum*,
We may know more than he.

XVIII.

Now Peter ran to seed in soul
Into a walking paradox

(For he was neither part nor whole,
Nor good nor bad, nor knave nor fool)
Among the woods and rocks.

XIX.

Furious he rode where late he ran,
Lashing and spurring his tame hobby;
Turned to a formal puritan,
A solemn and unsexual man,—
He half believed *White Obi.*

XX.

This steed in vision he would ride,
High trotting over nine-inch bridges,
With Flibbertigibbet, imp of pride,
Mocking and mowing by his side—
A mad-brained goblin for a guide—
Over cornfields, gates, and hedges.

XXI.

After these ghastly rides, he came
Home to his heart, and found from thence
Much stolen of its accustomed flame;
His thoughts grew weak, drowsy, and lame
Of their intelligence.

XXII.

To Peter's view, all seemed one hue;
He was no whig, he was no tory;
No deist and no Christian he;—
He got so subtle that to be
Nothing was all his glory.

XXIII.

One single point in his belief
From his organization sprung,—
The heart-enrooted faith, the chief
Ear in his doctrines' blighted sheaf,
That "happiness is wrong."

XXIV.

So thought Calvin and Dominic;
So think their fierce successors, who
Even now would neither stint nor stick
Our flesh from off our bones to pick,
If they might "do their do."

XXV.

His morals thus were undermined:—
The old Peter Bell, the hard old potter,
Was born anew within his mind;
He grew dull, harsh, sly, unrefined,
As when he tramped beside the Otter.

XXVI.

In the death-hues of agony
Lambently flashing from a fish,
Now Peter felt amused to see
Shades like a rainbow's rise and flee,
Mixed with a certain hungry wish.

XXVII.

So in his Country's dying face
He looked—and, lovely as she lay,
Seeking in vain his last embrace,
Wailing her ōwn abandoned case,
With hardened sneer he turned away:

XXVIII.

And coolly to his own Soul said:
"Do you not think that we might make
A poem on her when she's dead?—
Or no! a thought is in my head!
Her shroud for a new sheet I'll take.

XXIX.

"My wife wants one.—Let who will bury
This mangled corpse! And I and you,
My dearest Soul, will then make merry,
As the Prince Regent did with Sherry,—
Ay, and at last desert me too."

XXX.

And so his soul would not be gay,
But moaned within him; like a fawn
Moaning within a cave, it lay
Wounded and wasting, day by day,
Till all its life of life was gone.

XXXI.

As troubled skies stain waters clēar,
The storm in Peter's heart and mind

Now made his verses dark and queer;
They were the ghosts of what they were,
Shaking dim graveclothes in the wind:—

XXXII.

For he now raved enormous folly,
Of baptisms, Sunday-schools, and graves.
'Twould make George Colman melancholy
To have heard him, like a male Molly,
Chanting those stupid staves.

XXXIII.

Yet the Reviews, who heaped abuse
On Peter while he wrote for freedom,
So soon as in his song they spy
The folly which soothes tyranny,
Praise him, for those who feed 'em.

XXXIV.

He was a man too great to scan;
A planet lost in truth's keen rays;
His virtue, awful and prodigious;
He was the most sublime, religious,
Pure-minded poet of these days.

XXXV.

As soon as he read that, cried Peter,
"Eureka! I have found the way
To make a better thing of metre
Than e'er was made by living creature
Up to this blessed day."

XXXVI.

Then Peter wrote odes to the Devil;—
In one of which he meekly said:
"May Carnage and Slaughter,
Thy niece and thy daughter,
May Rapine and Famine,
Thy gorge ever cramming,
Glut thee with living and dead!

XXXVII.

"May Death and Damnation
And Consternation
Flit up from Hell with pure intent!

Slash them at Manchester,
Glasgow, Leeds, and Chester;
Drench all with blood from Avon to Trent!

XXXVIII.

"Let thy body-guard yeomen
Hew down babes and women,
And laugh with bold triumph till heaven be rent!
When Moloch in Jewry
Munched children with fury,
It was thou, Devil, dining with pure intent."

PART VII.—DOUBLE DAMNATION.

I.

THE Devil now knew his proper cue.
Soon as he read the ode, he drove
To his friend Lord Mac Murderchouse's,
A man of interest in both houses,
And said:—"For money or for love,

II.

"Pray find some cure, or sinecure,
To feed from the superfluous taxes
A friend of ours—a poet: fewer
Have fluttered tamer to the lure
Than he." His lordship stands and racks his

III.

Stupid brains, while one might count
As many beads as he had boroughs,—
At length replies (from his mean front,
Like one who rubs out an account,
Smoothing away the unmeaning furrows):

IV.

"It happens fortunately, dear sir,
I can. I hope I need require
No pledge from you that he will stir
In our affairs; like Oliver,
That he'll be worthy of his hire."

V.

These words exchanged, the news sent off
To Peter, home the Devil hied,—
Took to his bed. He had no cough,
No doctor,—meat and drink enough,—
Yet that same night he died.

VI.

The Devil's corpse was leaded down;
His decent heirs enjoyed his pelf,
Mourning-coaches many a one
Followed his hearse along the town:—
Where was the Devil himself?

VII.

When Peter heard of his promotion,
His eyes grew like two stars for bliss.
There was a bow of sleek devotion
Engendering in his back; each motion
Seemed a Lord's shoe to kiss.

VIII.

He hired a house, bought plate, and made
A genteel drive up to his door,
With sifted gravel neatly laid,—
As if defying all who said
Peter was ever poor.

IX.

But a disease soon struck into
The very life and soul of Peter.
He walked about—slept—had the hue
Of health upon his cheeks—and few
Dug better—none a heartier eater:—

X.

And yet a strange and horrid curse
Clung upon Peter, night and day.
Month after month the thing grew worse,
And deadlier than in this my verse
I can find strength to say.

XI.

Peter was dull—(he was at first
Dull)—oh so dull, so very dull!

Whether he talked, wrote, or rehearsed,
Still with his dullness was he cursed—
Dull—beyond all conception, dull.

XII.

No one could read his books—no mortal,
But a few natural friends, would hear him;
The parson came not near his portal;
His state was like that of the immortal
Described by Swift—no man could bear him.

XIII.

His sister, wife, and children, yawned,
With a long, slow, and drear ennui
All human patience far beyond;
Their hopes of heaven each would have pawned
Anywhere else to be.

XIV.

But in his verse and in his prose
The essence of his dullness was
Concentred and compressed so close
'Twould have made Gulatimozin doze
On his red gridiron of brass.

XV.

A printer's boy, folding those pages,
Fell slumbrously upon one side,
Like those famed Seven who slept three ages.
To wakeful frenzy's vigil rages,
As opiates, were the same applied.

XVI.

Even the Reviewers who were hired
To do the work of his reviewing,
With adamantine nerves, grew tired;—
Gaping and torpid they retired,
To dream of what they should be doing.

XVII.

And worse and worse the drowsy curse
Yawned in him till it grew a pest;
A wide contagious atmosphere
Creeping like cold through all things near;
A power to infect and to infest.

XVIII.

His servant-maids and dogs grew dull;
His kitten, late a sportive elf;
The woods and lakes so beautiful
Of dim stupidity were full;
All grew dull as Peter's self.

XIX.

The earth under his feet, the springs
Which lived within it a quick life—
The air, the winds of many wings
That fan it with new murmurings—
Were dead to their harmonious strife.

XX.

The birds and beasts within the wood,
The insects and each creeping thing,
Were now a silent multitude;
Love's work was left unwrought—no brood
Near Peter's house took wing.

XXI.

And every neighbouring cottager
Stupidly yawned upon the other;
No jackass brayed; no little cur
Cocked up his ears; no man would stir
To save a dying mother.

XXII.

Yet all from that charmed district went
But some half-idiot and half-knave,
Who, rather than pay any rent,
Would live with marvellous content
Over his father's grave.

XXIII.

No bailiff dared within that space,
For fear of the dull charm, to enter;
A man would bear upon his face,
For fifteen months, in any case,
The yawn of such a venture.

XXIV.

Seven miles above—below—around—
This pest of dullness holds its sway;
A ghastly life without a sound.
To Peter's soul the spell is bound—
How should it ever pass away?

SHELLEY'S NOTES TO PETER BELL THE THIRD.

P. 3.

And a polygamic Potter.

The oldest scholiasts read

"A *dodecagamic* Potter."

This is at once more descriptive and more megalophonous,—but the alliteration of the text had captivated the vulgar ear of the herd of later commentators.

P. 4.

He oiled his hair.

To those who have not duly appreciated the distinction between *Whale* and *Russia* oil, this attribute might rather seem to belong to the Dandy than the Evangelic. The effect, when to the windward, is indeed so similar that it requires a subtle naturalist to discriminate the animals. They belong, however, to distinct genera.

P. 9.

Like cats, who amant miserè.

One of the attributes in Linnæus's description of the Cat. To a similar cause the caterwauling of more than one species of this genus is to be referred;—except, indeed, that the poor quadruped is compelled to quarrel with its own pleasures, whilst the biped is supposed only to quarrel with those of others.

P. 9.

Of their own virtue, and pursuing
Their gentler sisters to that ruin
Without which—what were chastity?

What would this husk and excuse for a virtue be without its kernel prostitution, or the kernel prostitution without this husk of a virtue? I wonder the women of the town do not form an association, like the Society for the Suppression of Vice, for the support of what may be called the "King, Church, and Constitution," of their order. But this subject is almost too horrible for a joke.

P. 10.

'Tis a lie to say "God damns."

This libel on our national oath, and this accusation of all our countrymen of being in the daily practice of solemnly asseverating the most enormous falsehood, I fear deserves the notice of a more active Attorney General than that here alluded to.

P. 19.

From God's own voice.

Vox populi vox Dei. As Mr. Godwin truly observes of a more famous saying, *of some merit as a popular maxim, but totally destitute of philosophical accuracy.*

P. 20.

When the book came, the Devil sent
It to P. Verbovale Esquire.

Quasi, *Qui valet verba—i. e.* all the words which have been, are, or may be, expended by, for, against, with, or on, him. A sufficient proof of the utility of this history. Peter's progenitor who selected this name seems to have possessed a *pure anticipated cognition* of the nature and modesty of this ornament of his posterity.

P. 22.

As when he tramped beside the Otter.

A famous river in the new Atlantis of the Dynastophilic Pantisocratists.

P. 22.

Shades like a rainbow's rise and flee,
Mixed with a certain hungry wish.

See the description of the beautiful colours produced during the agonizing death of a number of trout, in the fourth part of a long poem in blank verse, published within a few years. That poem contains curious evidence of the gradual hardening of a strong but circumscribed sensibility, of the perversion of a penetrating but panic-stricken understanding. The author might have derived a lesson which he had probably forgotten from these sweet and sublime verses:

"The lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,
Taught both by what she * shows and what conceals—
Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."

P. 24.

It was thou, Devil, dining with pure intent.

It is curious to observe how often extremes meet. Cobbett and Peter use the same language for a different purpose: Peter is indeed a sort of metrical Cobbet. Cobbett is, however, more mischievous than Peter, because he pollutes a holy and now unconquerable cause with the principles of legitimate murder; whilst the other only makes a bad one ridiculous and odious. If either Peter or Cobbett should see this note, each will feel more indignation at being compared to the other than at any censure implied in the moral perversion laid to their charge.

NOTE ON PETER BELL THE THIRD, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

In this new edition I have added *Peter Bell the Third.* A critique on Wordsworth's *Peter Bell* reached us at Leghorn, which amused Shelley exceedingly, and suggested this poem.

I need scarcely observe that nothing personal to the author of *Peter Bell* is intended in this poem. No man ever admired Wordsworth's poetry more;—he read it perpetually, and taught others to appreciate its beauties. This poem is, like all others written by Shelley, ideal. He conceived the idealism of a poet—a man of

* Nature.

lofty and creative genius—quitting the glorious calling of discovering and announcing the beautiful and good, to support and propagate ignorant prejudices and pernicious errors; imparting to the unenlightened, not that ardour for truth and spirit of toleration which Shelley looked on as the sources of the moral improvement and happiness of mankind, but false and injurious opinions, that evil was good, and that ignorance and force were the best allies of purity and virtue. His idea was that a man gifted, even as transcendently as the author of *Peter Bell*, with the highest qualities of genius, must, if he fostered such errors, be infected with dullness. This poem was written as a warning—not as a narration of the reality. He was unacquainted personally with Wordsworth, or with Coleridge (to whom he alludes in the fifth part of the poem), and therefore, I repeat, his poem is purely ideal;—it contains something of criticism on the compositions of those great poets, but nothing injurious to the men themselves.

No poem contains more of Shelley's peculiar views with regard to the errors into which many of the wisest have fallen, and the pernicious effects of certain opinions on society. Much of it is beautifully written: and, though, like the burlesque drama of *Swellfoot*, it must be looked on as a plaything, it has so much merit and poetry—so much of *himself* in it—that it cannot fail to interest greatly, and by right belongs to the world for whose instruction and benefit it was written.

ŒDIPUS TYRANNUS;
OR, SWELLFOOT THE TYRANT.

A TRAGEDY, IN TWO ACTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL DORIC.

Choose Reform or Civil War,
When through thy streets, instead of hare with dogs,
A Consort-Queen shall hunt a King with Hogs,
Riding on the Ionian Minotaur.

ADVERTISEMENT.

This tragedy is one of a triad, or system of three plays (an arrangement according to which the Greeks were accustomed to connect their dramatic representations) elucidating the wonderful and appalling fortunes of the Swellfoot dynasty. It was evidently written by some learned Theban; and, from its characteristic dullness, apparently before the duties on the importation of Attic salt had been repealed by the Bœotarchs. The tenderness with which he treats the Pigs proves him to have been a *sus Bœotiæ*, possibly *Epicuri de grege porcus;* for, as the poet observes,

"A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind."

No liberty has been taken with the translation of this remarkable piece of antiquity, except the suppressing a seditious and blasphemous chorus of the Pigs and Bulls at the last act. The word Hoydipouse (or more properly Œdipus) has been rendered

literally Swellfoot, without its having been conceived necessary to determine whether a swelling of the hind or the fore feet of the Swinish Monarch is particularly indicated.

Should the remaining portions of this tragedy be found, entitled *Swellfoot in Angaria* and *Charité*, the translator might be tempted to give them to the reading public.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

TYRANT SWELLFOOT, *King of Thebes.*
IONA TAURINA, *his Queen.*
MAMMON, *Arch-Priest of Famine.*
PYRGANAX, DAKRY, LAOCTONOS, } *Wizards, Ministers of* SWELLFOOT.
The GADFLY.
The LEECH.
The RAT.
The MINOTAUR.
MOSES, *the Sow-gelder.*
SOLOMON, *the Porkman.*
ZEPHANIAH, *Pig-butcher.*

CHORUS *of the Swinish Multitude.*
Guards, Attendants, Priests, &c., &c.

SCENE—*Thebes.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A magnificent Temple, built of thigh-bones and death's-heads, and tiled with scalps. Over the altar the statue of Famine, veiled; a number of Boars, Sows, and Sucking Pigs, crowned with thistle, shamrock, and oak, sitting on the steps, and clinging round the altar of the Temple.*

Enter SWELLFOOT, *in his royal robes, without perceiving the* Pigs.

Swellfoot. THOU supreme Goddess, by whose power divine
These graceful limbs are clothed in proud array
[*He contemplates himself with satisfaction.*
Of gold and purple, and this kingly paunch
Swells like a sail before a favouring breeze,
And these most sacred nether promontories
Lie satisfied with layers of fat, and these
Bœotian cheeks, like Egypt's pyramid,
(Nor with less toil were their foundations laid)
Sustain the cone of my untroubled brain,
That point, the emblem of a pointless nothing!
Thou to whom Kings and laurelled Emperors,
Radical-butchers, Paper-money-millers,
Bishops and Deacons, and the entire army
Of those fat martyrs to the persecution
Of stifling turtle-soup and brandy-devils,
Offer their sacred vows! thou plenteous Ceres

Of their Eleusis, hail!

The Swine. Eigh! eigh! eigh! eigh!

Swellfoot. Ha! what are ye,
Who, crowned with leaves devoted to the Furies,
Cling round this sacred shrine?

Swine. Aigh! aigh! aigh!

Swellfoot. What! ye that are
The very beasts that, offered at her altar
With blood and groans, salt-cake and fat and inwards,
Ever propitiate her reluctant will
When taxes are withheld?

Swine. Ugh! ugh! ugh!

Swellfoot. What! yé who grub
With filthy snouts my red potatoes up
In Allen's rushy Bog? who eat the oats
Up, from my cavalry in the Hebrides?
Who swill the hog-wash soup my cooks digest
From bones, and rags, and scraps of shoe-leather,
Which should be given to cleaner Pigs than you?

THE SWINE.—SEMICHORUS I.

The same, alas! the same;
Though only now the name
Of Pig remains to me.

SEMICHORUS II.

If 'twere your kingly will
Us wretched Swine to kill,
What should we yield to thee?

Swellfoot. Why, skin and bones, and some few hairs for mortar.

CHORUS OF SWINE.

I have heard your Laureate sing
That pity was a royal thing.
Under your mighty ancestors, we Pigs
Were blessed as nightingales on myrtle sprigs,
Or grasshoppers that live on noonday dew,
And sung, old annals tell, as sweetly too.
But now our sties are fallen in, we catch
The murrain and the mange, the scab and itch;
Sometimes your royal dogs tear down our thatch,
And then we seek the shelter of a ditch;
Hog-wash, or grains, or ruta-baga, none
Has yet been ours since your reign begun.

FIRST SOW.

My Pigs, 'tis in vain to tug!

SECOND SOW.

I could almost eat my litter!

FIRST PIG.

I suck, but no milk will come from the dug.

SECOND PIG.

Our skin and our bones would be bitter.

THE BOARS.

We fight for this rag of greasy rug,
Though a trough of wash would be fitter.

SEMICHORUS.

Happier Swine were they than we,
Drowned in the Gadarean sea!—
I wish that Pity would drive out the devils
Which in your royal bosom hold their revels,
And sink us in the waves of your compassion.
Alas! the Pigs are an unhappy nation!
Now, if your Majesty would have our bristles
To bind your mortar with, or fill our colons
With rich blood, or make brawn out of our gristles,
In policy—ask else your royal Solons—
You ought to give us hog-wash and clean straw,
And sties well thatched; besides, it is the law!

Swellfoot. This is sedition and rank blasphemy!
Ho! there, my guards!

Enter a GUARD.

Guard. Your sacred Majesty?

Swellfoot. Call in the Jews, Solomon the court porkman,
Moses the sow-gelder, and Zephaniah the hog-butcher.

Guard. They are in waiting, sire.

Enter SOLOMON, MOSES, *and* ZEPHANIAH.

Swellfoot. Out with your knife, old Moses, and spay those Sows
[*The* Pigs *run about in consternation.*
That load the earth with Pigs; cut close and deep.
Moral restraint I see has no effect,
Nor prostitution, nor our own example,
Starvation, typhus-fever, war, nor prison.
This was the art which the Arch-priest of Famine
Hinted at in his charge to the Theban clergy.
Cut close and deep, good Moses.

Moses. Let your Majesty
Keep the Boars quiet, else—
Swellfoot. Zephaniah, cut
That fat Hog's throat; the brute seems overfed.
Seditious hunks! to whine for want of grains!
Zephaniah. Your sacred Majesty, he has the dropsy;
We shall find pints of hydatids in's liver.
He has not half an inch of wholesome fat
Upon his carious ribs.
Swellfoot. 'Tis all the same;—
He'll serve instead of riot-money when
Our murmuring troops bivouaque in Thebes streets;
And January winds, after a day
Of butchering, will make them relish carrion.
Now, Solomon, I'll sell you in a lump
The whole kit of them.
Solomon. Why, your Majesty,
I could not give——
Swellfoot. Kill them out of the way;
That shall be price enough. And let me hear
Their everlasting grunts and whines no more!
[*Exeunt, driving in the* Swine.

Enter MAMMON, *the Arch-Priest; and* PYRGANAX, *Chief of the Council of Wizards.*

Pyrganax. The future looks as black as death; a cloud,
Dark as the frown of Hell, hangs over it.
The troops grow mutinous—the revenue fails—
There's something rotten in us—for the level
Of the state slopes, its very bases topple;
The boldest turn their backs upon themselves!
Mammon. Why, what's the matter, my dear fellow, now?
Do the troops mutiny?—decimate some regiments;
Does money fail?—come to my mint—coin paper,
Till gold be at a discount, and, ashamed
To show his bilious face, go purge himself,
In emulation of her vestal whiteness.
Pyrganax. Oh would that this were all! The oracle!
Mammon. Why, it was I who spoke that oracle;
And whether I was dead-drunk or inspired
I cannot well remember—nor, in truth,
The oracle itself.

Pyrganax. The words went thus :—
"Bœotia, choose reform or civil war,
When through the streets, instead of hare with dogs,
A Consort-Queen shall hunt a King with Hogs,
Riding upon the Ionian Minotaur."
Mammon. Now, if the oracle had ne'er foretold
This sad alternative, it must arrive,
Or not; and so it must now that it has;
And whether I was urged by grace divine
Or Lesbian liquor to declare these words
(Which must, as all words must, be false or true)
It matters not: for the same Power made all,
Oracle, wine, and me and you,—or none—
'Tis the same thing. If you but knew as much
Of oracles as I do——
Pyrganax. You Arch-priests
Believe in nothing; if you were to dream
Of a particular number in the lottery,
You would not buy the ticket.
Mammon. Yet our tickets
Are seldom blanks. But what steps have you taken?
For prophecies, when once they get abroad,
Like liars who tell the truth to serve their ends,
Or hypocrites who, from assuming virtue,
Do the same actions that the virtuous do,
Contrive their own fulfilment. This Iona—
Well—you know what the chaste Pasiphae did,
Wife to that most religious King of Crete,
And still how popular the tale is here;
And these dull Swine of Thebes boast their descent
From the free Minotaur. You know they still
Call themselves Bulls, though thus degenerate;
And everything relating to a bull
Is popular and respectable in Thebes :—
Their arms are seven bulls in a field gules;
They think their strength consists in eating beef.
Now there were danger in the precedent,
If Queen Iona——
Pyrganax. I have taken good care
That shall not be. I struck the crust o' the earth
With this enchanted rod, and hell lay bare:
And from a cavern full of ugly shapes

I chose a Leech, a Gadfly, and a Rat.
The Gadfly was the same which Juno sent
To agitate Io, and which Ezekiel mentions
That the Lord whistled for out of the mountains
Of utmost Ethiopia, to torment
Mesopotamian Babylon. The beast
Has a loud trumpet like the scarabee;
His crooked tail is barbed with many stings,
Each able to make a thousand wounds, and each
Immedicable; from his convex eyes
He sees fair things in many hideous shapes,
And trumpets all his falsehood to the world.
Like other beetles, he is fed on dung:
He has eleven feet with which he crawls,
Trailing a blistering slime. And this foul beast
Has tracked Iona from the Theban limits,
From isle to isle, from city unto city;
Urging her flight from the far Chersonese
To fabulous Solyma, and the Ætnean Isle,
Ortygia, Melite, and Calypso's Rock,
And the swart tribes of Garamant and Fez,
Æolia and Elysium, and thy shores,
Parthenope, which now, alas! are free,
And through the fortunate Saturnian land,
Into the darkness of the West.

Mammon. But if
This Gadfly should drive Iona *hither?*

Pyrganax. Gods! what an *if!* But there is my grey Rat;
So thin with want he can crawl in and out
Of any narrow chink and filthy hole;
And he shall creep into her dressing-room,
And—

Mammon. My dear friend, where are your wits? as if
She does not always toast a piece of cheese,
And bait the trap? and rats, when lean enough
To crawl through *such* chinks——

Pyrganax. But my Leech—a leech
Fit to suck blood, with lubricous round rings,
Capaciously expatiative, which make
His little body like a red balloon,
As full of blood as that of hydrogen,
Sucked from men's hearts; insatiably he sucks

And clings and pulls—a horseleech, whose deep maw.
The plethoric King Swellfoot could not fill,
And who, till full, will cling for ever.
Mammon. This
For Queen Iona might suffice, and less.
But 'tis the Swinish Multitude I fear;
And in that fear I have——
Pyrganax. Done what?
Mammon. Disinherited
My eldest son Chrysaor, because he
Attended public meetings, and would always
Stand prating there of commerce, public faith,
Economy, and unadulterate coin,
And other topics ultra-radical;
And have entailed my estate, called the Fool's Paradise,
And funds, in fairy-money, bonds, and bills,
Upon my accomplished daughter Banknotina,
And married her to the Gallows.
Pyrganax. A good match!
Mammon. A high connexion, Pyrganax. The bridegroom
Is of a very ancient family,
Of Hounslow Heath, Tyburn, and the New Drop,
And has great influence in both Houses. Oh!
He makes the fondest husband; nay, *too* fond:—
New-married people should not kiss in public;—
But the poor souls love one another so!
And then my little grandchildren, the Gibbets,
Promising children as you ever saw,—
The young playing at hanging, the elder learning
How to hold radicals. They are well taught too,
For every Gibbet says its catechism,
And reads a select chapter in the bible
Before it goes to play. [*A most tremendous humming is heard.*
Pyrganax. Ha! what do I hear?

Enter GADFLY, *followed by* LEECH *and* RAT.

Mammon. Your Gadfly, as it seems, is tired of gadding.

GADFLY.

Hum! hum! hum!
From the lakes of the Alps, and the cold grey scalps
Of the mountains, I come;
Hum! hum! hum!

From Morocco and Fez, and the high palaces
Of golden Byzantium;
From the temples divine of old Palestine,
From Athens and Rome,
With a ha! and a hum!
I come! I come!
All in-doors and windows
Were open to me:
I saw all that sin does,
Which lamps hardly see
That burn in the night by the curtained bed,—
The impudent lamps! for they blushed not red.
Dinging and singing,
From slumber I rung her,
Loud as the clank of an ironmonger!
Hum! hum! hum!

Far, far, far,
With the trump of my lips, and the sting at my hips,
I drove her—afar!
Far, far, far!
From city to city, abandoned of pity,
A ship without needle or star.
Homeless she passed, like a cloud on the blast,
Seeking peace, finding war.
She is here in her car,
From afar and afar—
Hum! hum!

I have stung her and wrung her!
The venom is working;—
And, if you had hung her
With canting and quirking,
She could not be deader than she will be soon;
I have driven her close to you under the moon.
Night and day, hum! hum! ha!
I have hummed her and drummed her
From place to place, till at last I have dumbed her.
Hum! hum! hum!

LEECH.

I will suck
Blood or muck.

The disease of the state is a plethory;
Who so fit to reduce it as I?

RAT.

I'll slily seize and
Let blood from her weasand,—
Creeping through crevice and chink and cranny,
With my snaky tail and my sides so scranny.

Pyrganax. Aroint ye! Thou unprofitable worm!
[*To the* LEECH.
And thou, dull beetle, get thee back to hell, [*To the* GADFLY.
To sting the ghosts of Babylonian kings,
And the ox-headed Io.

SWINE (*within*).

Ugh, ugh, ugh!
Hail! Iona the divine!
We will be no longer Swine,
But Bulls with horns and dewlaps.

RAT.

For
You know, my lord, the Minotaur——

Pyrganax (*fiercely*). Be silent! get to hell, or I will call
The cat out of the kitchen! [*Exit the* RAT.
Well, Lord Mammon,
This is a pretty business!

Mammon. I will go
And spell some scheme to make it ugly then. [*Exit.*

Enter SWELLFOOT.

Swellfoot. She is returned! Taurina is in Thebes,
When Swellfoot wishes that she were in hell!
O Hymen, clothed in yellow jealousy,
And waving o'er the couch of wedded kings
The torch of Discord with its fiery hair,
This is thy work, thou patron saint of queens!
Swellfoot is wived! Though parted by the sea,
The very name of wife had conjugal rights;
Her cursèd image ate, drank, slept with me,
And in the arms of Adiposa oft
Her memory has received a husband's——

[*A loud tumult and cries of* "Iona for ever!—No Swellfoot!"
Hark
How the Swine cry "Iona Taurina!"
I suffer the real presence. Pyrganax,

Off with her head!

Pyrganax. But I must first impanel
A jury of the Pigs.

Swellfoot. Pack them then.

Pyrganax. Or fattening some few in two separate sties,
And giving them clean straw, tying some bits
Of ribbon round their legs—giving their Sows
Some tawdry lace and bits of lustre-glass,
And their young Boars white and red rags, and tails
Of cows, and jay feathers, and sticking cauliflowers
Between the ears of the old ones . . . . And, when
They are persuaded that by the inherent virtue
Of these things they are all imperial Pigs,
Good Lord! they'd rip each other's bellies up,—
Not to say, help us in destroying *her*.

Swellfoot. This plan might be tried too;—where's General Laoctonos?

Enter LAOCTONOS *and* DAKRY.

It is my royal pleasure
That you, Lord General, bring the head and body
(If separate, it would please me better) hither
Of Queen Iona.

Laoctonos. That pleasure I well knew;
And made a charge with those battalions bold
Called, from their dress and grin, the Royal Apes,
Upon the Swine,—who in a hollow square
Enclosed her, and received the first attack
Like so many rhinoceroses, and then,
Retreating in good order, with bare tusks
And wrinkled snouts presented to the foe,
Bore her in triumph to the Public Sty.
What is still worse, some Sows upon the ground
Have given the Ape-guards apples, nuts, and gin,
And they all whisk their tails aloft, and cry,
"Long live Iona! down with Swellfoot!"

Pyrganax. Hark!

The Swine (*without*). Long live Iona! down with Swellfoot!

Dakry. I
Went to the garret of the Swineherd's Tower
Which overlooks the sty, and made a long
Harangue (all words) to the assembled Swine,
Of delicacy, mercy, judgment, law,

Morals, and precedents, and purity,
Adultery, destitution, and divorce,
Piety, faith, and state necessity,
And how I loved the Queen!—And then I wept
With the pathos of my own eloquence;
And every tear turned to a millstone, which
Brained many a gaping Pig, and there was made
A slough of blood and brains upon the place,
Greased with the pounded bacon. Round and round
The millstones rolled, ploughing the pavement up,
And hurling Sucking Pigs into the air,
With dust and stones.

Enter MAMMON.

Mammon. I wonder that grey wizards
Like you should be so beardless in their schemes;
It had been but a point of policy
To keep Iona and the Swine apart.
Divide and rule. But ye have made a junction
Between two parties who will govern you,
But for my art.—Behold this Bag! it is
The poison-bag of that Green Spider huge
On which our spies skulked in ovation through
The streets of Thebes when they were paved with dead.
A bane so much the deadlier fills it now
As calumny is worse than death,—for here
The Gadfly's venom, fifty times distilled,
Is mingled with the vomit of the Leech,
In due proportion, and black ratsbane which
That very Rat who like the Pontic tyrant
Nurtures himself on poison dare not touch.
All is sealed up with the broad seal of Fraud,
Who is the Devil's Lord High Chancellor;
And over it the Primate of all Hell
Murmured this pious baptism:—"Be thou called
The Green Bag; and this power and grace be thine—
That thy contents, on whomsoever poured,
Turn innocence to guilt, and gentlest looks
To savage, foul, and fierce deformity.
Let all baptized by thy infernal dew
Be called adulterer, drunkard, liar, wretch!
No name left out which orthodoxy loves,
Court Journal or legitimate Review!

Be they called tyrant, beast, fool, glutton, lover
Of other wives and husbands than their own—
The heaviest sin on this side of the Alps!
Wither they to a ghastly caricature
Of what was human! let not man nor beast
Behold their face with unaverted eyes,
Or hear their names with ears that tingle not
With blood of indignation, rage, and shame!"
This is a perilous liquor, good my lords.

[SWELLFOOT *approaches to touch the* GREEN BAG.

Beware! for God's sake, beware!—if you should break
The seal, and touch the fatal liquor——

Pyrganax. There!
Give it to me: I have been used to handle
All sorts of poisons. His dread Majesty
Only desires to see the colour of it.

Mammon. Now, with a little common sense, my lords,
Only undoing all that has been done,
(Yet so as it may seem we but confirm it)
Our victory is assured. We must entice
Her Majesty from the Sty; and make the Pigs
Believe that the contents of the Green Bag
Are the true test of guilt or innocence;
And that, if she be guilty, 'twill transform her
To manifest deformity like guilt,—
If innocent, she will become transfigured
Into an angel, such as they say she is,
And they will see her flying through the air,
So bright that she will dim the noonday sun,
Showering down blessings in the shape of comfits.
This, trust a priest, is just the sort of thing
Swine will believe. I'll wager you will see them
Climbing upon the thatch of their low sties,
With pieces of smoked glass, to watch her sail
Among the clouds; and some will hold the flaps
Of one another's ears between their teeth,
To catch the coming hail of comfits in.
You, Pyrganax, who have the gift o' the gab,
Make them a solemn speech to this effect:
I go to put in readiness the feast
Kept to the honour of our goddess Famine,
Where, for more glory, let the ceremony

Take place of the uglification of the Queen.

Dakry (to Swellfoot). I, as the keeper of your sacred conscience,
Humbly remind your Majesty that the care
Of your high office, as man-milliner
To red Bellona, should not be deferred.

Pyrganax. All part, in happier plight to meet again! [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Public Sty. The* Boars *in full Assembly.*

Enter PYRGANAX.

Pyrganax. Grant me your patience, Gentlemen and Boars,
Ye by whose patience under public burthens
The glorious constitution of these sties
Subsists, and shall subsist. The Lean-pig rates
Grow with the growing populace of Swine;
The taxes, that true source of piggishness
(How can I find a more appropriate term
To include religion, morals, peace, and plenty,
And all that fit Bœotia as a nation
To teach the other nations how to live?)
Increase with piggishness itself; and still
Does the revenue, that great spring of all
The patronage and pensions and by-payments
Which freeborn pigs regard with jealous eyes,
Diminish; till at length, by glorious steps,
All the land's produce will be merged in taxes,
And the revenue will amount to——nothing!
The failure of a foreign market for
Sausages, bristles, and blood-puddings,
And such home manufactures, is but partial;
And that the population of the Pigs,
Instead of hog-wash, has been fed on straw
And water, is a fact which is—you know—
That is—it is a state necessity—
Temporary, of course. Those impious Pigs
Who have, by frequent squeaks, dared to impugn
The settled Swellfoot system, or to make
Irreverent mockery of the genuflexions

Inculcated by the Arch-priest, have been whipped
Into a loyal and an orthodox whine.
Things being in this happy state, the Queen
Iona——
A loud cry from the Pigs. She is innocent! most innocent!
Pyrganax. That is the very thing that I was saying,
Gentlemen Swine. The Queen Iona, being
Most innocent, no doubt, returns to Thebes,
And the lean Sows and Boars collect about her,
Wishing to make her think that *we* believe
(I mean those more substantial Pigs who swill
Rich hog-wash while the others mouth damp straw)
That she is guilty. Thus the Lean-pig faction
Seeks to obtain that hog-wash which has been
Your immemorial right, and which I will
Maintain you in to the last drop of—
A Boar (*interrupting him*). What
Does any one accuse her of?
Pyrganax. Why, no one
Makes *any* positive accusation. But
There were hints dropped; and so the privy wizards
Conceived that it became them to advise
His Majesty to investigate their truth.
Not for his own sake; he could be content
To let his wife play any pranks she pleased,
If by that sufferance he could please the Pigs;
But then he fears the morals of the Swine,
The Sows especially, and what effect
It might produce upon the purity and
Religion of the rising generation
Of Sucking Pigs, if it could be suspected
That Queen Iona— [*A pause.*
First Boar. Well, go on; we long
To hear what she can possibly have done.
Pyrganax. Why, it is hinted that a certain Bull——
Thus much is *known*:—The milk-white Bulls that feed
Beside Clitumnus and the crystal lakes
Of the Cisalpine mountains, in fresh dews
Of lotus-grass and blossoming asphodel
Sleeking their silken hair, and with sweet breath
Loading the morning winds until they faint
With living fragrance, are so beautiful!——

Well, *I* say nothing;—but Europa rode
On such a one from Asia into Crete,
And the enamoured sea grew calm beneath
His gliding beauty; and Pasiphae,
Iona's grandmother,——but *she* is innocent!
And that both you and I and all assert.
First Boar. Most innocent!
Pyrganax. Behold this Bag; a bag—
Second Boar. Oh! no Green Bags! Jealousy's eyes are green,
Scorpions are green, and water-snakes and efts,
And verdigris, and—
Pyrganax. Honourable Swine,
In piggish souls can prepossessions reign?
Allow me to remind you, grass is green—
All flesh is grass—no bacon but is flesh—
Ye are but bacon. This divining Bag
(Which is not green, but only bacon-colour)
Is filled with liquor which, if sprinkled o'er
A woman guilty of—we all know what—
Makes her so hideous, till she finds one blind,
She never can commit the like again.
If innocent, she will turn into an angel,
And rain down blessings in the shape of comfits
As she flies up to heaven. Now, my proposal
Is to convert her sacred Majesty
Into an angel (as I am sure we shall do)
By pouring on her head this mystic water. [*Showing the Bag.*
I know that she is innocent; I wish
Only to prove her so to all the world.
First Boar. Excellent, just, and noble Pyrganax!
Second Boar. How glorious it will be to see her Majesty
Flying above our heads, her petticoats
Streaming like—like—like—
Third Boar. Anything.
Pyrganax. Oh no!
But like a standard of an admiral's ship,
Or like the banner of a conquering host,
Or like a cloud dyed in the dying day,
Unravelled on the blast from a white mountain;
Or like a meteor, or a war-steed's mane,
Or waterfall from a dizzy precipice
Scattered upon the wind.

First Boar. Or a cow's tail,—
Second Boar. Or *anything*, as the learned Boar observed.
Pyrganax. Gentlemen Boars, I move a resolution—
That her most sacred Majesty should be
Invited to attend the feast of Famine,
And to receive upon her chaste white body
Dews of apotheosis from this Bag.

[*A great confusion is heard of the* Pigs out of Doors, *which communicates itself to those within. During the first Strophe, the doors of the Sty are staved in, and a number of exceedingly lean* Pigs *and* Sows *and* Boars *rush in.*

SEMICHORUS I.
No! Yes!

SEMICHORUS II.
Yes! No!

SEMICHORUS I.
A law!

SEMICHORUS II.
A flaw!

SEMICHORUS I.
Porkers, we shall lose our wash,
Or must share it with the Lean Pigs!

FIRST BOAR.
Order! order! be not rash!
Was there ever such a scene, Pigs!

AN OLD SOW (*rushing in*).
I never saw so fine a dash
Since I first began to wean Pigs.

SECOND BOAR (*solemnly*).
The Queen will be an angel time enough.
I vote, in form of an amendment, that
Pyrganax rub a little of that stuff
Upon his face—

Pyrganax. [*His heart is seen to beat through his waistcoat.*
Gods! What would ye be at?

SEMICHORUS I.
Pyrganax has plainly shown
Cloven foot and jackdaw feather.

SEMICHORUS II.
I vote Swellfoot and Iona
Try the magic test together;

Whenever royal spouses bicker,
Both should try the magic liquor.

AN OLD BOAR (*aside*).

A miserable state is that of Pigs;
For, if their drivers would tear caps and wigs,
The Swine must bite each other's ear therefore.

AN OLD SOW (*aside*).

A wretched lot Jove has assigned to Swine;
Squabbling makes Pig-herds hungry, and they dine
On bacon, and whip Sucking Pigs the more.

CHORUS.

Hog-wash has been ta'en away:
If the Bull-Queen is divested,
We shall be in every way
Hunted, stripped, exposed, molested;
Let us do whate'er we may
That she shall not be arrested.
Queen, we entrench you with walls of brawn,
And palisades of tusks sharp as a bayonet.
Place your most sacred person here: we pawn
Our lives that none a finger dare to lay on it.
Those who wrong you wrong us;
Those who hate you hate us;
Those who sting you sting us;
Those who bait you bait us.
The oracle is now about to be
Fulfilled by circumvolving destiny—
Which says: "Thebes, choose reform or civil war,
When through your streets, instead of hare with dogs,
A Consort-Queen shall hunt a King with Hogs,
Riding upon the Ionian Minotaur."

Enter IONA TAURINA.

Iona Taurina (*coming forward*). Gentlemen Swine and gentle Lady Pigs,
The tender heart of every Boar acquits
Their Queen of any act incongruous
With native piggishness; and she, reposing
With confidence upon the grunting nation,
Has thrown herself, her cause, her life, her all,
Her innocence, into their hoggish arms;
Nor has the expectation been deceived

Of finding shelter there. Yet know, great Boars,
(For such whoever lives among you finds you,
And so do I) the innocent are proud!
I have accepted your protection only
In compliment of your kind love and care,
Not for necessity. The innocent
Are safest there where trials and dangers wait;
Innocent queens o'er white-hot ploughshares tread,
Unsinged; and ladies (Erin's laureate sings it)
Decked with rare gems and beauty rarer still
Walked from Killarney to the Giant's Causeway,
Through rebels, smugglers, troops of yeomanry,
White-boys and Orange-boys and constables,
Tithe-proctors and excise people, uninjured!
Thus I!—
Lord Pyrganax, I do commit myself
Into your custody, and am prepared
To stand the test, whatever it may be.

Pyrganax. This magnanimity in your sacred Majesty
Must please the Pigs. You cannot fail of being
A heavenly angel.—Smoke your bits of glass,
Ye loyal Swine, or her transfiguration
Will blind your wondering eyes.

An Old Boar (*aside*). Take care, my lord,
They do not smoke you first.

Pyrganax. At the approaching feast
Of Famine, let the expiation be.

Swine. Content! content!

Iona Taurina (*aside*). I, most content of all,
Know that my foes even thus prepare their fall!

[*Exeunt omnes.*

SCENE II.—*The interior of the Temple of* FAMINE. *The statue of the Goddess, a skeleton clothed in party-coloured rags, seated upon a heap of skulls and loaves intermingled. A number of exceedingly fat Priests in black garments arrayed on each side; Court Porkmen with marrow-bones and cleavers in their hands. A flourish of trumpets.*

Enter MAMMON *as Arch-priest*, SWELLFOOT, DAKRY, PYRGANAX, LAOCTONOS, *followed by* IONA TAURINA *guarded. On the other side enter the* Swine.

CHORUS OF PRIESTS,

Accompanied by the Court Porkmen on marrow-bones and cleavers.

Goddess bare and gaunt and pale,
Empress of the World, all hail!
What though Cretans old called thee
City-crested Cybele?
We call thee Famine!—
Goddess of fasts and feasts, starving and cramming!
Through thee, for emperors, kings, and priests, and lords,
Who rule by viziers, sceptres, bank-notes, words,
The earth pours forth its plenteous fruits,
Corn, wool, linen, flesh, and roots.
Those who consume these fruits through thee grow fat;
Those who produce these fruits through thee grow lean:
Whatever change takes place, oh stick to that!
And let things be as they have ever been;
At least while we remain thy priests,
And proclaim thy fasts and feasts!
Through thee the sacred Swellfoot dynasty
Is based upon a rock amid that sea
Whose waves are Swine—So let it ever be!

[SWELLFOOT *&c. seat themselves at a table magnificently covered at the upper end of the Temple. Attendants pass over the stage with hog-wash in pails. A number of* Pigs, *exceedingly lean, follow them licking up the wash.*

Mammon. I fear your sacred Majesty has lost
The appetite which you were used to have.
Allow me now to recommend this dish—
A simple kickshaw by your Persian cook,
Such as is served at the Greak King's second table.
The price and pains which its ingredients cost
Might have maintained some dozen families
A winter or two—not more. So plain a dish
Could scarcely disagree.
Swellfoot. After the trial,
And these fastidious Pigs are gone, perhaps
I may recover my lost appetite.
I feel the gout flying about my stomach.
Give me a glass of maraschino punch.
Pyrganax (*filling his glass and standing up*).
The glorious Constitution of the Pigs.

All. A toast! a toast! Stand up, and three times three!
Dakry. No heeltaps—darken daylights!
Laoctonos. Claret, somehow,
Puts me in mind of blood, and blood of claret.
Swellfoot. Laoctonos is fishing for a compliment,—
But 'tis his due. Yes, you have drunk more wine,
And shed more blood, than any man in Thebes.
[*To* PYRGANAX.
For God's sake stop the grunting of those Pigs.
Pyrganax. We dare not, sire! 'tis famine's privilege.

CHORUS OF SWINE.

Hail to thee, hail to thee, Famine!
Thy throne is on blood, and thy robe is of rags,
Thou devil which livest on damning!
Saint of new churches, and cant, and Green Bags!
Till in pity and terror thou risest,
Confounding the schemes of the wisest.
When thou liftest thy skeleton form,
When the loaves and the skulls roll about,
We will greet thee—the voice of a storm
Would be lost in our terrible shout!

Then hail to thee, hail to thee, Famine!
Hail to thee, Empress of Earth!
When thou risest, dividing possessions,
When thou risest, uprooting oppressions,
In the pride of thy ghastly mirth,—
Over palaces, temples, and graves,
We will rush as thy minister slaves,
Trampling behind in thy train,
Till all be made level again!

Mammon. I hear a crackling of the giant bones
Of the dread image, and in the black pits
Which once were eyes I see two livid flames:
These prodigies are oracular, and show
The presence of the unseen Deity.
Mighty events are hastening to their doom!
Swellfoot. I only hear the lean and mutinous Swine
Grunting about the temple.
Dakry. In a crisis
Of such exceeding delicacy, I think

We ought to put her Majesty the Queen
Upon her trial without delay.
Mammon. The Bag
Is here.
Pyrganax. I have rehearsed the entire scene,
With an ox-bladder and some ditch-water,
On Lady P.—it cannot fail. [*Taking up the bag.*
Your Majesty (*to* SWELLFOOT)
In such a filthy business had better
Stand on one side, lest it should sprinkle you.
A spot or two on me would do no harm;
Nay, it might hide the blood which the sad Genius
Of the Green Isle has fixed, as by a spell,
Upon my brow—which would stain all its seas,
But which those seas could never wash away.
Iona Taurina. My lord, I am ready—nay I am impatient—
To undergo the test.

[*A graceful figure in a semi-transparent veil passes unnoticed through the temple; the word* LIBERTY *is seen through the veil, as if it were written in fire upon its forehead. Its words are almost drowned in the furious grunting of the* Pigs, *and the business of the trial. She kneels on the steps of the Altar, and speaks in tones at first faint and low, but which ever become louder and louder.*

Mighty Empress! Death's white wife!
Ghastly mother-in-law of Life!
By the God who made thee such,
By the magic of thy touch,
By the starving, and the cramming
Of fasts and feasts!—by thy dread self, O Famine!
I charge thee, when thou wake the multitude,
Thou lead them not upon the paths of blood!
The earth did never mean her foison
For those who crown life's cup with poison
Of fanatic rage and meaningless revenge—
But for those radiant spirits who are still
The standard-bearers in the van of Change.
Be they the appointed stewards to fill
The lap of pain, and toil, and age!—
Remit, O Queen, thy accustomed rage!
Be what thou art not! In voice faint and low

Freedom calls Famine, her eternal foe,
To brief alliance, hollow truce.—Rise now!

[*Whilst the Veiled Figure has been chanting this strophe,* MAMMON, DAKRY, LAOCTONOS, *and* SWELLFOOT, *have surrounded* IONA TAURINA, *who, with her hands folded on her breast, and her eyes lifted to heaven, stands, as with saint-like resignation, to wait the issue of the business, in perfect confidence of her innocence.*

[PYRGANAX, *after unsealing the* GREEN BAG, *is gravely about to pour the liquor upon her head, when suddenly the whole expression of her figure and countenance changes; she snatches it from his hand with a loud laugh of triumph, and empties it over* SWELLFOOT *and his whole Court, who are instantly changed into a number of filthy and ugly animals, and rush out of the Temple. The image of* FAMINE *then arises with a tremendous sound, the* Pigs *begin scrambling for the loaves, and are tripped up by the skulls; all those who* eat *the loaves are turned into* Bulls, *and arrange themselves quietly behind the altar. The image of* FAMINE *sinks through a chasm in the earth, and a* MINOTAUR *rises.*

Minotaur. I am the Ionian Minotaur, the mightiest
Of all Europa's taurine progeny—
I am the old traditional Man Bull.
And, from my ancestors' having been Ionian,
I am called Ion, which by interpretation
Is John; in plain Theban, that is to say—
My name's John Bull. I am a famous hunter,
And can leap any gate in all Bœotia,—
Even the palings of the royal park,
Or double ditch about the new enclosures;
And, if your Majesty will deign to mount me,
At least till you have hunted down your game,
I will not throw you.

Iona Taurina.

[*During this speech she has been putting on boots and spurs, and a hunting-cap buckishly cocked on one side, and, tucking up her hair, she leaps nimbly on his back.*

Hoa! hoa! tallyho! tallyho! ho! ho!
Come, let us hunt these ugly badgers down,
These stinking foxes, these devouring otters,

These hares, these wolves, these anything but men!
Hey for a whipper-in! My loyal Pigs,
Now let your noses be as keen as beagles',
Your steps as swift as greyhounds', and your cries
More dulcet and symphonious than the bells
Of village towers on sunshine holiday!
Wake all the dewy woods with jangling music!
Give them no law (are they not beasts of blood?)
But such as they gave you. Tallyho! ho!
Through forest, furze, and bog and den and desert,
Pursue the ugly beasts! Tallyho! ho!

FULL CHORUS OF IONA AND THE SWINE.

Tallyho! tallyho!
Through rain, hail, and snow,
Through brake, gorse, and briar,
Through fen, flood, and mire,
We go! we go!

Tallyho! tallyho!
Through pond, ditch, and slough,
Wind them and find them,
Like the devil behind them!
Tallyho! tallyho!

[*Exeunt, in full cry;* IONA *driving on the* SWINE, *with the empty* GREEN BAG.

SHELLEY'S NOTES TO ŒDIPUS TYRANNUS.

P. 31.

Nor with less toil were their foundations laid.

See *Universal History* for an account of the number of people who died, and the immense consumption of garlic by the wretched Egyptians who made a sepulchre for the name as well as the bodies of their tyrants.

P. 36.

The Gadfly was the same which Juno sent
To agitate Io.

The *Prometheus Bound* of Æschylus.

P. 36.

And which Ezekiel mentions
That the Lord whistled for out of the mountains.

"And the Lord whistled for the gadfly out of Ethiopia, and for the bee out of Egypt," &c.—EZEKIEL.

P. 37.

And married her to the Gallows.

"Unless a man would marry a gallows, and beget young gibbets, I never saw one so prone."—CYMBELINE.

P. 48.

Erin's laureate sings it.

"Rich and rare were the gems she wore."

See Moore's Irish Melodies.

NOTE ON ŒDIPUS TYRANNUS, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

IN the brief journal I kept in those days, I find recorded, in August 1820, Shelley "begins *Swellfoot the Tyrant*, suggested by the pigs at the fair of San Giuliano." This was the period of Queen Caroline's landing in England, and the struggles made by George IV. to get rid of her claims; which failing, Lord Castlereagh placed the "*Green Bag*" on the table of the House of Commons, demanding in the King's name that an enquiry should be instituted into his wife's conduct. These circumstances were the theme of all conversation among the English. We were then at the Baths of San Giuliano. A friend came to visit us on the day when a fair was held in the square, beneath our windows: Shelley read to us his *Ode to Liberty*; and was riotously accompanied by the grunting of a quantity of pigs brought for sale to the fair. He compared it to the "chorus of frogs" in the satiric drama of Aristophanes; and, it being an hour of merriment, and one ludicrous association suggesting another, he imagined a political-satirical drama on the circumstances of the day, to which the pigs would serve as chorus—and *Swellfoot* was begun. When finished, it was transmitted to England, printed, and published anonymously; but stifled at the very dawn of its existence by the Society for the Suppression of Vice, who threatened to prosecute it, if not immediately withdrawn. The friend who had taken the trouble of bringing it out, of course, did not think it worth the annoyance and expense of a contest, and it was laid aside.

Hesitation of whether it would do honour to Shelley prevented my publishing it at first. But I cannot bring myself to keep back anything he ever wrote; for each word is fraught with the peculiar views and sentiments which he believed to be beneficial to the human race, and the bright light of poetry irradiates every thought. The world has a right to the entire compositions of such a man; for it does not live and thrive by the outworn lesson of the dullard or the hypocrite, but by the original free thoughts of men of genius, who aspire to pluck bright Truth

> "from the pale-faced moon;
> Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
> Where fathom-line could never touch the ground
> And pluck up drowned"

Truth. Even those who may dissent from his opinions will consider that he was a man of genius, and that the world will take more interest in his slightest word than from the waters of Lethe which are so eagerly prescribed as medicinal for all its wrongs and woes. This drama, however, must not be judged for more than was meant. It is a mere plaything of the imagination; which even may not excite smiles among many, who will not see wit in those combinations of thought which were full of the ridiculous to the author. But, like everything he wrote, it breathes that deep sympathy for the sorrows of humanity, and indignation against its oppressors, which make it worthy of his name.

THE WITCH OF ATLAS.

TO MARY

(ON HER OBJECTING TO THE FOLLOWING POEM, UPON THE SCORE OF ITS CONTAINING NO HUMAN INTEREST.)

I.

How, my dear Mary, are you critic-bitten,
(For vipers kill, though dead) by some review,—
That you condemn these verses I have written,
Because they tell no story, false or true?
What though no mice are caught by a young kitten?
May it not leap and play as grown cats do,
Till its claws come? Prithee, for this one time,
Content thee with a visionary rhyme.

II.

What hand would crush the silken-wingèd fly,
The youngest of inconstant April's minions,
Because it cannot climb the purest sky,
Where the swan sings amid the sun's dominions?
Not thine. Thou knowest 'tis its doom to die
When Day shall hide within her twilight pinions
The lucent eyes and the eternal smile,
Serene as thine, which lent it life awhile.

III.

To thy fair feet a wingèd Vision came,
Whose date should have been longer than a day,
And o'er thy head did beat its wings for fame,
And in thy sight its fading plumes display;
The watery bow burned in the evening flame;
But the shower fell, the swift Sun went his way—
And that is dead.—Oh let me not believe
That any thing of mine is fit to live!

IV.

Wordsworth informs us he was nineteen years
Considering and re-touching Peter Bell;
Watering his laurels with the killing tears
Of slow dull care, so that their roots to hell

Might pierce, and their wide branches blot the spheres
Of heaven, with dewy leaves and flowers: this well
May be, for heaven and earth conspire to foil
The over-busy gardener's blundering toil.

V.

My Witch indeed is not so sweet a creature
As Ruth or Lucy, whom his graceful praise
Clothes for our grandsons—but she matches Peter,
Though he took nineteen years, and she three days,
In dressing. Light the vest of flowing metre
She wears: he, proud as dandy with his stays,
Has hung upon his wiry limbs a dress
Like King Lear's looped and windowed raggedness.

VI.

If you strip Peter, you will see a fellow
Scorched by hell's hyperequatorial climate
Into a kind of a sulphureous yellow;
A lean mark, hardly fit to fling a rhyme at;
In shape a Scaramouch, in hue Othello.
If you unveil my Witch, no priest nor primate
Can shrive you of that sin,—if sin there be
In love when it becomes idolatry.

THE WITCH OF ATLAS.

I.

BEFORE those cruel twins whom at one birth
Incestuous Change bore to her father Time,
Error and Truth, had hunted from the earth
All those bright natures which adorned its prime,
And left us nothing to believe in, worth
The pains of putting into learned rhyme,
A Lady Witch there lived on Atlas mountain
Within a cavern by a secret fountain.

II.

Her mother was one of the Atlantides.
The all-beholding Sun had ne'er beholden
In his wide voyage o'er continents and seas
So fair a creature, as she lay enfolden

In the warm shadow of her loveliness;
He kissed her with his beams, and made all golden
The chamber of grey rock in which she lay.
She, in that dream of joy, dissolved away.

III.

'Tis said she was first changed into a vapour;
And then into a cloud,—such clouds as flit
(Like splendour-winged moths about a taper)
Round the red west when the Sun dies in it;
And then into a meteor, such as caper
On hill-tops when the Moon is in a fit;
Then into one of those mysterious stars
Which hide themselves between the Earth and Mars.

IV.

Ten times the Mother of the Months had bent
Her bow beside the folding-star, and bidden
With that bright sign the billows to indent
The sea-deserted sand—(like children chidden,
At her command they ever came and went)—
Since in that cave a dewy splendour hidden
Took shape and motion. With the living form
Of this embodied Power the cave grew warm.

V.

A lovely Lady garmented in light
From her own beauty: deep her eyes as are
Two openings of unfathomable night
Seen through a tempest's cloven roof; her hair
Dark; the dim brain whirls dizzy with delight,
Picturing her form. Her soft smiles shone afar;
And her low voice was heard like love, and drew
All living things towards this wonder new.

VI.

And first the spotted camelopard came;
And then the wise and fearless elephant;
Then the sly serpent, in the golden flame
Of his own volumes intervolved. All gaunt
And sanguine beasts her gentle looks made tame,—
They drank before her at her sacred fount;
And every beast of beating heart grew bold,
Such gentleness and power even to behold.

VII.

The brinded lioness led forth her young,
That she might teach them how they should forego
Their inborn thirst of death; the pard unstrung
His sinews at her feet, and sought to know,
With looks whose motions spoke without a tongue,
How he might be as gentle as the doe.
The magic circle of her voice and eyes
All savage natures did imparadise.

VIII.

And old Silenus, shaking a green stick
Of lilies, and the Wood-gods in a crew,
Came blithe as in the olive copses thick
Cicadæ are, drunk with the noonday dew;
And Dryope and Faunus followed quick,
Teazing the God to sing them something new;
Till in this cave they found the Lady lone,
Sitting upon a seat of emerald stone.

IX.

And universal Pan, 'tis said, was there.
And, though none saw him,—through the adamant
Of the deep mountains, through the trackless air,
And through those living spirits, like a want,—
He passed out of his everlasting lair
Where the quick heart of the great world doth pant,
And felt that wondrous Lady all alone,—
And she felt him upon her emerald throne.

X.

And every Nymph of stream and spreading tree,
And every Shepherdess of Ocean's flocks
Who drives her white waves over the green sea,
And Ocean with the brine on his grey locks,
And quaint Priapus with his company,—
All came, much wondering how the enwombèd rocks
Could have brought forth so beautiful a birth:
Her love subdued their wonder and their mirth.

XI.

The herdsmen and the mountain maidens came,
And the rude kings of pastoral Garamant—

Their spirits shook within them, as a flame
Stirred by the air under a cavern gaunt:
Pygmies and Polyphemes, by many a name,
Centaurs and Satyrs, and such shapes as haunt
Wet clefts,—and lumps neither alive nor dead,
Dog-headed, bosom-eyed, and bird-footed.

XII.

For she was beautiful. Her beauty made
The bright world dim, and everything beside
Seemed like the fleeting image of a shade.
No thought of living spirit could abide
(Which to her looks had ever been betrayed)
On any object in the world so wide,
On any hope within the circling skies,—
But on her form, and in her inmost eyes.

XIII.

Which when the Lady knew, she took her spindle,
And twined three threads of fleecy mist, and three
Long lines of light, such as the dawn may kindle
The clouds and waves and mountains with, and she
As many starbeams, ere their lamps could dwindle
In the belated moon, wound skilfully;
And with these threads a subtle veil she wove—
A shadow for the splendour of her love.

XIV.

The deep recesses of her odorous dwelling
Were stored with magic treasures:—sounds of air
Which had the power all spirits of compelling,
Folded in cells of crystal silence there;
Such as we hear in youth, and think the feeling
Will never die—yet, ere we are aware,
The feeling and the sound are fled and gone,
And the regret they leave remains alone.

XV.

And there lay Visions swift and sweet and quaint,
Each in its thin sheath like a chrysalis;—
Some eager to burst forth; some weak and faint
With the soft burthen of intensest bliss
It is their work to bear to many a saint
Whose heart adores the shrine which holiest is,

Even Love's; and others, white, green, grey, and black,
And of all shapes :—and each was at her beck.

XVI.

And odours in a kind of aviary
Of ever-blooming Eden-trees she kept,
Clipped in a floating net a love-sick Fairy
Had woven from dew-beams while the moon yet slept.
As bats at the wired window of a dairy,
They beat their vans; and each was an adept—
When loosed and missioned, making wings of winds—
To stir sweet thoughts or sad in destined minds.

XVII.

And liquors clear and sweet, whose healthful might
Could medicine the sick soul to happy sleep,
And change eternal death into a night
Of glorious dreams—or, if eyes needs must weep,
Could make their tears all wonder and delight—
She in her crystal phials did closely keep:
If men could drink of those clear phials, 'tis said
The living were not envied of the dead.

XVIII.

Her cave was stored with scrolls of strange device,
The works of some Saturnian Archimage,
Which taught the expiations at whose price
Men from the Gods might win that happy age
Too lightly lost, redeeming native vice,—
And which might quench the earth-consuming rage
Of gold and blood, till men should live and move
Harmonious as the sacred stars above :—

XIX.

And how all things that seem untameable,
Not to be checked and not to be confined,
Obey the spells of Wisdom's wizard skill;
Time, earth, and fire, the ocean, and the wind,
And all their shapes, and man's imperial will;—
And other scrolls whose writings did unbind
The inmost lore of love—let the profane
Tremble to ask what secrets they contain.

XX.

And wondrous works of substances unknown,
To which the enchantment of her Father's power
Had changed those rugged blocks of savage stone,
Were heaped in the recesses of her bower;
Carved lamps and chalices, and phials which shone
In their own golden beams—each like a flower
Out of whose depth a firefly shakes his light
Under a cypress in a starless night.

XXI.

At first she lived alone in this wild home,
And her own thoughts were each a minister,
Clothing themselves or with the ocean foam,
Or with the wind, or with the speed of fire,
To work whatever purposes might come
Into her mind: such power her mighty Sire
Had girt them with, whether to fly or run
Through all the regions which he shines upon.

XXII.

The Ocean-nymphs and Hamadryades,
Oreads and Naiads with long weedy locks,
Offered to do her bidding through the seas,
Under the earth, and in the hollow rocks,
And far beneath the matted roots of trees,
And in the gnarlèd heart of stubborn oaks;
So they might live for ever in the light
Of her sweet presence—each a satellite.

XXIII.

"This may not be," the Wizard Maid replied.
"The fountains where the Naiades bedew
Their shining hair at length are drained and dried;
The solid oaks forget their strength, and strew
Their latest leaf upon the mountains wide;
The boundless ocean like a drop of dew
Will be consumed; the stubborn centre must
Be scattered like a cloud of summer dust.

XXIV.

"And ye, with them, will perish one by one.
If I must sigh to think that this shall be,

If I must weep when the surviving Sun
Shall smile on your decay—oh ask not me
To love you till your little race is run;
I cannot die as ye must.—Over me
Your leaves shall glance—the streams in which ye dwell
Shall be my paths henceforth; and so farewell!"

XXV.

She spoke and wept. The dark and azure well
Sparkled beneath the shower of her bright tears,
And every little circlet where they fell
Flung to the cavern-roof inconstant spheres
And intertangled lines of light. A knell
Of sobbing voices came upon her ears
From those departing forms, o'er the serene
Of the white streams and of the forest green.

XXVI.

All day the Wizard Lady sat aloof;
Spelling out scrolls of dread antiquity
Under the cavern's fountain-lighted roof;
Or broidering the pictured poesy
Of some high tale upon her growing woof,
Which the sweet splendour of her smiles could dye
In hues outshining heaven—and ever she
Added some grace to the wrought poesy:—

XXVII.

While on her hearth lay blazing many a piece
Of sandal wood, rare gums, and cinnamon.
Men scarcely know how beautiful fire is;
Each flame of it is as a precious stone
Dissolved in ever-moving light, and *this*
Belongs to each and all who gaze thereon.
The Witch beheld it not, for in her hand
She held a woof that dimmed the burning brand.

XXVIII.

This Lady never slept, but lay in trance
All night within the fountain—as in sleep.
Its emerald crags glowed in her beauty's glance:
Through the green splendour of the water deep

She saw the constellations reel and dance
Like fireflies—and withal did ever keep
The tenour of her contemplations calm,
With open eyes, closed feet, and folded palm.

XXIX.

And, when the whirlwinds and the clouds descended
From the white pinnacles of that cold hill,
She passed at dewfall to a space extended,
Where, in a lawn of flowering asphodel
Amid a wood of pines and cedars blended,
There yawned an inextinguishable well
Of crimson fire, full even to the brim,
And overflowing all the margin trim :—

XXX.

Within the which she lay when the fierce war
Of wintry winds shook that innocuous liquor,
In many a mimic moon and bearded star,
O'er woods and lawns. The serpent heard it flicker
In sleep, and, dreaming still, he crept afar.
And, when the windless snow descended thicker
Than autumn leaves, she watched it as it came
Melt on the surface of the level flame.

XXXI.

She had a boat which some say Vulcan wrought
For Venus, as the chariot of her star ;
But it was found too feeble to be fraught
With all the ardours in that sphere which are,
And so she sold it, and Apollo bought
And gave it to this daughter : from a car,
Changed to the fairest and the lightest boat
Which ever upon mortal stream did float.

XXXII.

And others say that, when but three hours old,
The firstborn Love out of his cradle leapt,
And clove dun chaos with his wings of gold,
And, like a horticultural adept,
Stole a strange seed, and wrapped it up in mould,
And sowed it in his mother's star, and kept

Watering it all the summer with sweet dew,
And with his wings fanning it as it grew.

XXXIII.

The plant grew strong and green—the snowy flower
Fell, and the long and gourd-like fruit began
To turn the light and dew by inward power
To its own substance: woven tracery ran
Of light firm texture, ribbed and branching, o'er
The solid rind, like a leaf's veinèd fan,—
Of which Love scooped this boat, and with soft motion
Piloted it round the circumfluous ocean.

XXXIV.

This boat she moored upon her fount, and lit
A living spirit within all its frame,
Breathing the soul of swiftness into it.
Couched on the fountain—like a panther tame
(One of the twain at Evan's feet that sit),
Or as on Vesta's sceptre a swift flame,
Or on blind Homer's heart a winged thought—
In joyous expectation lay the boat.

XXXV.

Then by strange art she kneaded fire and snow
Together, tempering the repugnant mass
With liquid love—all things together grow
Through which the harmony of love can pass;
And a fair Shape out of her hands did flow—
A living image which did far surpass
In beauty that bright shape of vital stone
Which drew the heart out of Pygmalion.

XXXVI.

A sexless thing it was, and in its growth
It seemed to have developed no defect
Of either sex, yet all the grace of both.
In gentleness and strength its limbs were decked;
The bosom lightly swelled with its full youth;
The countenance was such as might select
Some artist that his skill should never die,
Imaging forth such perfect purity.

XXXVII.

From its smooth shoulders hung two rapid wings
Fit to have borne it to the seventh sphere,
Tipped with the speed of liquid lightenings,
Dyed in the ardours of the atmosphere.
She led her creature to the boiling springs
Where the light boat was moored, and said "Sit here,"
And pointed to the prow, and took her seat
Beside the rudder with opposing feet.

XXXVIII.

And down the streams which clove those mountains vast,
Around their inland islets, and amid
The panther-peopled forests (whose shade cast
Darkness and odours, and a pleasure hid
In melancholy gloom) the pinnace passed;
By many a star-surrounded pyramid
Of icy crag cleaving the purple sky,
And caverns yawning round unfathomably.

XXXIX.

The silver moon into that winding dell,
With slanted gleam athwart the forest tops,
Tempered like golden evening, feebly fell;
A green and glowing light, like that which drops
From folded lilies in which glow-worms dwell,
When Earth over her face Night's mantle wraps;
Between the severed mountains lay on high,
Over the stream, a narrow rift of sky.

XL.

And, ever as she went, the Image lay
With folded wings and unawakened eyes;
And o'er its gentle countenance did play
The busy dreams, as thick as summer flies,
Chasing the rapid smiles that would not stay,
And drinking the warm tears, and the sweet sighs
Inhaling, which with busy murmur vain
They had aroused from that full heart and brain.

XLI.

And ever down the prone vale, like a cloud
Upon a stream of wind, the pinnace went:

Now lingering on the pools, in which abode
The calm and darkness of the deep content
In which they paused; now o'er the shallow road
Of white and dancing waters, all besprent
With sand and polished pebbles:—mortal boat
In such a shallow rapid could not float.

XLII.

And down the earthquaking cataracts, which shiver
Their snow-like waters into golden air,
Or under chasms unfathomable ever
Sepulchre them, till in their rage they tear
A subterranean portal for the river,
It fled. The circling sunbows did upbear
Its fall down the hoar precipice of spray,
Lighting it far upon its lampless way.

XLIII.

And, when the Wizard Lady would ascend
The labyrinths of some many-winding vale
Which to the inmost mountain upward tend,
She called "Hermaphroditus!"—and the pale
And heavy hue which slumber could extend
Over its lips and eyes, as on the gale
A rapid shadow from a slope of grass,
Into the darkness of the stream did pass.

XLIV.

And it unfurled its heaven-coloured pinions;
With stars of fire spotting the stream below,
And from above into the Sun's dominions
Flinging a glory like the golden glow
In which Spring clothes her emerald-wingèd minions,
All interwoven with fine feathery snow,
And moonlight splendour of intensest rime
With which frost paints the pines in winter time.

XLV.

And then it winnowed the elysian air
Which ever hung about that Lady bright,
With its etherial vans: and, speeding there,
Like a star up the torrent of the night,

Or a swift eagle in the morning glare
Breasting the whirlwind with impetuous flight,
The pinnace, oared by those enchanted wings,
Clove the fierce streams towards their upper springs.

XLVI.

The water flashed,—like sunlight, by the prow
Of a noon-wandering meteor flung to heaven;
The still air seemed as if its waves did flow
In tempest down the mountains; loosely driven,
The Lady's radiant hair streamed to and fro;
Beneath, the billows, having vainly striven
Indignant and impetuous, roared to feel
The swift and steady motion of the keel.

XLVII.

Or, when the weary moon was in the wane,
Or in the noon of interlunar night,
The Lady Witch in visions could not chain
Her spirit; but sailed forth under the light
Of shooting stars, and bade extend amain
His storm-outspeeding wings the Hermaphrodite;
She to the austral waters took her way,
Beyond the fabulous Thamondocana.

XLVIII.

Where, like a meadow which no scythe has shaven,
Which rain could never bend or whirlblast shake,
With the antarctic constellations paven,
Canopus and his crew, lay the austral lake—
There she would build herself a windless haven,
Out of the clouds whose moving turrets make
The bastions of the storm, when through the sky
The spirits of the tempest thundered by:—

XLIX.

A haven beneath whose translucent floor
The tremulous stars sparkled unfathomably;
And around which the solid vapours hoar,
Based on the level waters, to the sky
Lifted their dreadful crags, and, like a shore
Of wintry mountains, inaccessibly

Hemmed in with rifts and precipices grey,
And hanging crags, many a cove and bay.

L.

And, whilst the outer lake beneath the lash
Of the wind's scourge foamed like a wounded thing,
And the incessant hail with stony clash
Ploughed up the waters, and the flagging wing
Of the roused cormorant in the lightning flash
Looked like the wreck of some wind-wandering
Fragment of inky thunder-smoke—this haven
Was as a gem to copy heaven engraven.

LI.

On which that Lady played her many pranks,
Circling the image of a shooting star
(Even as a tiger on Hydaspes' banks
Outspeeds the antelopes which speediest are)
In her light boat; and many quips and cranks
She played upon the water; till the car
Of the late moon, like a sick matron wan,
To journey from the misty east began.

LII.

And then she called out of the hollow turrets
Of those high clouds, white, golden, and vermilion,
The armies of her ministering spirits.
In mighty legions million after million
They came, each troop emblazoning its merits
On meteor flags; and many a proud pavilion
Of the intertexture of the atmosphere
They pitched upon the plain of the calm mere.

LIII.

They framed the imperial tent of their great Queen
Of woven exhalations, underlaid
With lambent lightning-fire, as may be seen
A dome of thin and open ivory inlaid
With crimson silk. Cressets from the serene
Hung there, and on the water for her tread
A tapestry of fleece-like mist was strewn,
Dyed in the beams of the ascending moon.

LIV.

And on a throne o'erlaid with starlight, caught
Upon those wandering isles of aery dew
Which highest shoals of mountain shipwreck not,
She sate, and heard all that had happened new
Between the earth and moon since they had brought
The last intelligence: and now she grew
Pale as that moon lost in the watery night,
And now she wept, and now she laughed outright.

LV.

These were tame pleasures.—She would often climb
The steepest ladder of the crudded rack
Up to some beakèd cape of cloud sublime,
And like Arion on the dolphin's back
Ride singing through the shoreless air. Oft-time,
Following the serpent lightning's winding track,
She ran upon the platforms of the wind,
And laughed to hear the fireballs roar behind.

LVI.

And sometimes to those streams of upper air
Which whirl the earth in its diurnal round
She would ascend, and win the Spirits there
To let her join their chorus. Mortals found
That on those days the sky was calm and fair,
And mystic snatches of harmonious sound
Wandered upon the earth where'er she passed,
And happy thoughts of hope, too sweet to last.

LVII.

But her choice sport was, in the hours of sleep,
To glide adown old Nilus, when he threads
Egypt and Ethiopia from the steep
Of utmost Axumé until he spreads,
Like a calm flock of silver-fleecèd sheep,
His waters on the plain,—and crested heads
Of cities and proud temples gleam amid,
And many a vapour-belted pyramid:—

LVIII.

By Mœris and the Mareotid lakes,
Strewn with faint blooms like bridal-chamber floors,

Where naked boys bridling tame water-snakes,
Or charioteering ghastly alligators,
Had left on the sweet waters mighty wakes
Of those huge forms;—within the brazen doors
Of the Great Labyrinth slept both boy and beast,
Tired with the pomp of their Osirian feast.

LIX.

And where within the surface of the river
The shadows of the massy temples lie,
And never are erased, but tremble ever
Like things which every cloud can doom to die,—
Through lotus-paven canals, and wheresoever
The works of man pierced that serenest sky
With tombs and towers and fanes,—'twas her delight
To wander in the shadow of the night.

LX.

With motion like the spirit of that wind
Whose soft step deepens slumber, her light feet
Passed through the peopled haunts of humankind,
Scattering sweet visions from her presence sweet,—
Through fane and palace-court and labyrinth mined
With many a dark and subterranean street
Under the Nile; through chambers high and deep
She passed, observing mortals in their sleep.

LXI.

A pleasure sweet doubtless it was to see
Mortals subdued in all the shapes of sleep.
Here lay two sister-twins in infancy;
There a lone youth who in his dreams did weep;
Within, two lovers linkèd innocently
In their loose locks which over both did creep
Like ivy from one stem; and there lay calm
Old age with snow-bright hair and folded palm.

LXII.

But other troubled forms of sleep she saw,
Not to be mirrored in a holy song,—
Distortions foul of supernatural awe,
And pale imaginings of visioned wrong,

And all the code of Custom's lawless law
Written upon the brows of old and young.
"This," said the Wizard Maiden, "is the strife
Which stirs the liquid surface of man's life."

LXIII.

And little did the sight disturb her soul.
We, the weak mariners of that wide lake,
Where'er its shores extend or billows roll,
Our course unpiloted and starless make
O'er its wild surface to an unknown goal;
But she in the calm depths her way could take,
Where in bright bowers immortal forms abide
Beneath the weltering of the restless tide.

LXIV.

And she saw princes couched under the glow
Of sunlike gems; and round each temple-court
In dormitories ranged, row after row,
She saw the priests asleep,—all of one sort,
For all were educated to be so.
The peasants in their huts, and in the port
The sailors she saw cradled on the waves,
And the dead lulled within their dreamless graves.

LXV.

And all the forms in which those spirits lay
Were to her sight like the diaphanous
Veils in which those sweet ladies oft array
Their delicate limbs who would conceal from us
Only their scorn of all concealment: they
Move in the light of their own beauty thus.
But these and all now lay with sleep upon them,
And little thought a Witch was looking on them.

LXVI.

She all those human figures breathing there
Beheld as living spirits. To her eyes
The naked beauty of the soul lay bare,
And often through a rude and worn disguise
She saw the inner form most bright and fair:
And then she had a charm of strange device,

Which, murmured on mute lips with tender tone,
Could make that spirit mingle with her own.

LXVII.

Alas! Aurora, what wouldst thou have given
For such a charm, when Tithon became grey—
Or how much, Venus, of thy silver heaven
Wouldst thou have yielded, ere Proserpina
Had half (oh! why not all?) the debt forgiven
Which dear Adonis had been doomed to pay—
To any witch who would have taught you it?
The Heliad doth not know its value yet.

LXVIII.

'Tis said in after times her spirit free
Knew what love was, and felt itself alone:
But holy Dian could not chaster be
Before she stooped to kiss Endymion
Than now this Lady. Like a sexless bee,
Tasting all blossoms and confined to none,
Among those mortal forms the Wizard Maiden
Passed with an eye serene and heart unladen.

LXIX.

To those she saw most beautiful she gave
Strange panacea in a crystal bowl.
They drank in their deep sleep of that sweet wave,
And lived thenceforward as if some control,
Mightier than life, were in them; and the grave
Of such, when death oppressed the weary soul,
Was as a green and overarching bower
Lit by the gems of many a starry flower.

LXX.

For, on the night that they were buried, she
Restored the embalmer's ruining, and shook
The light out of the funeral lamps, to be
A mimic day within that deathy nook;
And she unwound the woven imagery
Of second childhood's swaddling bands, and took
The coffin, its last cradle, from its niche,
And threw it with contempt into a ditch.

LXXI.

And there the body lay, age after age,
Mute, breathing, beating, warm, and undecaying
Like one asleep in a green hermitage,—
With gentle sleep about its eyelids playing,
And living in its dreams beyond the rage
Of death or life; while they were still arraying
In liveries ever new the rapid, blind,
And fleeting generations of mankind.

LXXII.

And she would write strange dreams upon the brain
Of those who were less beautiful, and make
All harsh and crooked purposes more vain
Than in the desert is the serpent's wake
Which the sand covers. All his evil gain
The miser, in such dreams, would rise and shake
Into a beggar's lap; the lying scribe
Would his own lies betray without a bribe.

LXXIII.

The priests would write an explanation full,
Translating hieroglyphics into Greek,
How the god Apis really was a bull,
And nothing more; and bid the herald stick
The same against the temple doors, and pull
The old cant down: they licensed all to speak
Whate'er they thought of hawks and cats and geese,
By pastoral letters to each diocese.

LXXIV.

The king would dress an ape up in his crown
And robes, and seat him on his glorious seat,
And on the right hand of the sunlike throne
Would place a gaudy mockbird to repeat
The chatterings of the monkey. Every one
Of the prone courtiers crawled to kiss the feet
Of their great emperor when the morning came;
And kissed—alas, how many kiss the same!

LXXV.

The soldiers dreamed that they were blacksmiths, and
Walked out of quarters in somnambulism;

Round the red anvils you might see them stand
Like Cyclopses in Vulcan's sooty abysm,
Beating their swords to ploughshares :—in a band
The gaolers sent those of the liberal schism
Free through the streets of Memphis—much, I wis,
To the annoyance of king Amasis.

LXXVI.

And timid lovers, who had been so coy
They hardly knew whether they loved or not,
Would rise out of their rest, and take sweet joy,
To the fulfilment of their inmost thought ;
And, when next day the maiden and the boy
Met one another, both, like sinners caught,
Blushed at the thing which each believed was done
Only in fancy—till the tenth moon shone ;

LXXVII.

And then the Witch would let them take no ill :
Of many thousand schemes which lovers find,
The Witch found one,—and so they took their fill
Of happiness in marriage warm and kind.
Friends who, by practice of some envious skill,
Were torn apart (a wide wound, mind from mind)
She did unite again with visions clear
Of deep affection and of truth sincere.

LXXVIII.

These were the pranks she played among the cities
Of mortal men. And what she did to Sprites
And Gods, entangling them in her sweet ditties,
To do her will, and show their subtle sleights,
I will declare another time ; for it is
A tale more fit for the weird winter nights
Than for these garish summer days, when we
Scarcely believe much more than we can see.

NOTE ON THE WITCH OF ATLAS, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

We spent the summer of 1820 at the Baths of San Giuliano, four miles from Pisa. These baths were of great use to Shelley in soothing his nervous irritability. We made several excursions in the neighbourhood. The country around is fertile, and diversified and rendered picturesque by ranges of near hills and more distant mountains. The peasantry are a handsome intelligent race ; and there was a gladsome

sunny heaven spread over us, that rendered home and every scene we visited cheerful and bright. During some of the hottest days of August, Shelley made a solitary journey on foot to the summit of Monte San Pellegrino—a mountain of some height, on the top of which there is a chapel, the object, during certain days in the year, of many pilgrimages. The excursion delighted him while it lasted; though he exerted himself too much, and the effect was considerable lassitude and weakness on his return. During the expedition he conceived the idea, and wrote, in the three days immediately succeeding to his return, the *Witch of Atlas*. This poem is peculiarly characteristic of his tastes—wildly fanciful, full of brilliant imagery, and discarding human interest and passion, to revel in the fantastic ideas that his imagination suggested.

The surpassing excellence of *The Cenci* had made me greatly desire that Shelley should increase his popularity by adopting subjects that would more suit the popular taste than a poem conceived in the abstract and dreamy spirit of the *Witch of Atlas*. It was not only that I wished him to acquire popularity as redounding to his fame; but I believed that he would obtain a greater mastery over his own powers, and greater happiness in his mind, if public applause crowned his endeavours. The few stanzas that precede the poem were addressed to me on my representing these ideas to him. Even now I believe that I was in the right. Shelley did not expect sympathy and approbation from the public; but the want of it took away a portion of the ardour that ought to have sustained him while writing. He was thrown on his own resources, and on the inspiration of his own soul; and wrote because his mind overflowed, without the hope of being appreciated. I had not the most distant wish that he should truckle in opinion, or submit his lofty aspirations for the human race to the low ambition and pride of the many; but I felt sure that, if his poems were more addressed to the common feelings of men, his proper rank among the writers of the day would be acknowledged, and that popularity as a poet would enable his country men to do justice to his character and virtues, which in those days it was the mode to attack with the most flagitious calumnies and insulting abuse. That he felt these things deeply cannot be doubted, though he armed himself with the consciousness of acting from a lofty and heroic sense of right. The truth burst from his heart sometimes in solitude, and he would write a few unfinished verses that showed that he felt the sting; among such I find the following:—

> Alas! this is not what I thought Life was.
> I knew that there were crimes and evil men,
> Misery and hate; nor did I hope to pass,
> Untouched by suffering, through the rugged glen.
> In mine own heart I saw as in a glass
> The hearts of others. . . . . And, when
> I went among my kind, with triple brass
> Of calm endurance my weak breast I armed,
> To bear scorn, fear, and hate, a woful mass!

I believed that all this morbid feeling would vanish if the chord of sympathy between him and his countrymen were touched. But my persuasions were vain—the mind could not be bent from its natural inclination. Shelley shrunk instinctively from pourtraying human passion, with its mixture of good and evil, of disappointment and disquiet. Such opened again the wounds of his own heart; and he loved to shelter himself rather in the airiest flights of fancy, forgetting love and hate, and regret and lost hope, in such imaginations as borrowed their hues from sunrise or sunset, from the yellow moonshine or paly twilight, from the aspect of the far ocean or the shadows of the woods,—which celebrated the singing of the winds among the pines, the flow of a murmuring stream, and the thousand harmonious sounds which Nature creates in her solitudes. These are the materials which form the *Witch of Atlas:* it is a brilliant congregation of ideas such as his senses gathered, and his fancy coloured, during his rambles in the sunny land he so much loved.

EPIPSYCHIDION:

VERSES ADDRESSED TO THE NOBLE AND UNFORTUNATE LADY

EMILIA VIVIANI,

NOW IMPRISONED IN THE CONVENT OF ST ANNE, PISA.

L'anima amante si slancia fuori del creato, e si crea nell' infinito un mondo tutto per essa, diverso assai da questo oscuro e pauroso baratro.—*Her own words.*

My Song, I fear that thou wilt find but few
Who fitly shall conceive thy reasoning,
Of such hard matter dost thou entertain;
Whence, if by misadventure chance should bring
Thee to base company (as chance may do)
Quite unaware of what thou dost contain,
I prithee comfort thy sweet self again,
My last delight: tell them that they are dull,
And bid them own that thou art beautiful.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE writer of the following lines died at Florence, as he was preparing for a voyage to one of the wildest of the Sporades, which he had bought, and where he had fitted up the ruins of an old building; and where it was his hope to have realized a scheme of life suited perhaps to that happier and better world of which he is now an inhabitant, but hardly practicable in this. His life was singular; less on account of the romantic vicissitudes which diversified it than the ideal tinge which it received from his own character and feelings. The present poem, like the *Vita Nova* of Dante, is sufficiently intelligible to a certain class of readers without a matter-of-fact history of the circumstances to which it relates; and to a certain other class it must ever remain incomprehensible, from a defect of a common organ of perception for the ideas of which it treats. Not but that "*gran vergogna sarebbe a colui che rimasse cosa sotto veste di figura o di colore rettorico, e domandato non sapesse denudare le sue parole da cotal veste, in guisa che avessero verace intendimento.*"

The present poem appears to have been intended by the writer as the dedication to some longer one. The stanza on the preceding page is almost a literal translation from Dante's famous canzone

Voi che intendendo il terzo ciel movete, &c.

The presumptuous application of the concluding lines to his own composition will raise a smile at the expense of my unfortunate friend: be it a smile not of contempt, but pity.

S.

EPIPSYCHIDION.

SWEET Spirit, sister of that orphan one
Whose empire is the name thou weepest on,
In my heart's temple I suspend to thee
These votive wreaths of withered memory.

Poor captive bird, who from thy narrow cage
Pourest such music that it might assuage
The rugged hearts of those who prisoned thee,
Were they not deaf to all sweet melody,—
This song shall be thy rose: its petals pale
Are dead, indeed, my adored nightingale!
But soft and fragrant is the faded blossom,
And it has no thorn left to wound thy bosom.

High spirit-winged heart, who dost for ever
Beat thine unfeeling bars with vain endeavour,
Till those bright plumes of thought in which arrayed
It oversoared this low and worldly shade
Lie shattered, and thy panting wounded breast
Stains with dear blood its unmaternal nest,—
I weep vain tears: blood would less bitter be,
Yet poured forth gladlier could it profit thee.

Seraph of heaven, too gentle to be human,
Veiling beneath that radiant form of Woman
All that is insupportable in thee
Of light and love and immortality!
Sweet benediction in the eternal curse!
Veiled glory of this lampless universe!
Thou moon beyond the clouds! thou living form
Among the dead! thou star above the storm!
Thou wonder, and thou beauty, and thou terror!
Thou harmony of Nature's art! thou mirror
In whom, as in the splendour of the sun,
All shapes look glorious which thou gazest on,—
Ay, even the dim words which obscure thee now
Flash lightning-like with unaccustomed glow!
I pray thee that thou blot from this sad song
All of its much mortality and wrong
With those clear drops which start like sacred dew
From the twin lights thy sweet soul darkens through,
Weeping till sorrow becomes ecstacy:
Then smile on it so that it may not die.

I never thought before my death to see
Youth's vision thus made perfect. Emily,
I love thee,—though the world by no thin name
Will hide that love from its unvalued shame.

Would we two had been twins of the same mother!
Or that the name my heart lent to another
Could be a sister's bond for her and thee,
Blending two beams of one eternity!
Yet, were one lawful and the other true,
These names, though dear, could paint not as is due
How beyond refuge I am thine. Ah me!
I am not thine—I am a part of thee!

Sweet lamp! my moth-like muse has burnt its wings;
Or, like a dying swan who soars and sings,
Young Love should teach Time, in his own grey style,
All that thou art. Art thou not void of guile—
A lovely soul formed to be blessed and bless—
A well of sealed and secret happiness,
Whose waters like blithe light and music are,
Vanquishing dissonance and gloom—a star
Which moves not in the moving heavens, alone—
A smile amid dark frowns—a gentle tone
Amid rude voices—a beloved light—
A solitude, a refuge, a delight—
A lute which those whom Love has taught to play
Make music on to soothe the roughest day,
And lull fond Grief asleep—a buried treasure—
A cradle of young thoughts of wingless pleasure—
A violet-shrouded grave of woe?—I measure
The world of fancies, seeking one like thee,
And find—alas! mine own infirmity.

She met me, Stranger, upon life's rough way,
And lured me towards sweet death; as Night by Day,
Winter by Spring, or Sorrow by swift Hope,
Led into light, life, peace. An antelope
In the suspended impulse of its lightness
Were less etherially light. The brightness
Of her divinest presence trembles through
Her limbs, as underneath a cloud of dew
Embodied in the windless heaven of June,
Amid the splendour-winged stars, the moon
Burns inextinguishably beautiful:
And from her lips, as from a hyacinth full
Of honey-dew, a liquid murmur drops,
Killing the sense with passion, sweet as stops

Of planetary music heard in trance.
In her mild lights the starry spirits dance,
The sunbeams of those wells which ever leap
Under the lightnings of the soul—too deep
For the brief fathom-line of thought or sense.
The glory of her being, issuing thence,
Stains the dead blank cold air with a warm shade
Of unentangled intermixture, made,
By Love, of light and motion; one intense
Diffusion, one serene omnipresence,
Whose flowing outlines mingle in their flowing,
Around her cheeks and utmost fingers glowing
With the unintermitted blood, which there
Quivers (as in a fleece of snow-like air
The crimson pulse of living Morn may quiver),
Continuously prolonged and ending never,
Till they are lost, and in that beauty furled
Which penetrates and clasps and fills the world;
Scarce visible from extreme loveliness.
Warm fragrance seems to fall from her light dress,
And her loose hair; and, where some heavy tress
The air of her own speed has disentwined,
The sweetness seeems to satiate the faint wind;
And in the soul a wild odour is felt,
Beyond the sense, like fiery dews that melt
Into the bosom of a frozen bud.
See where she stands! a mortal shape indued
With love and life and light and deity,
And motion which may change but cannot die;
An image of some bright eternity;
A shadow of some golden dream; a splendour
Leaving the third sphere pilotless; a tender
Reflection of the eternal moon of love
Under whose motions life's dull billows move;
A metaphor of Spring and youth and morning;
A vision like incarnate April, warning
With smiles and tears Frost the anatomy
Into his summer grave.

Ah! woe is me!
What have I dared? where am I lifted? how
Shall I descend, and perish not? I know
That love makes all things equal: I have heard

By mine own heart this joyous truth averred,—
The spirit of the worm beneath the sod,
In love and worship, blends itself with God.

Spouse! sister! angel! pilot of the fate
Whose course has been so starless! O too late
Beloved, O too soon adored, by me!
For in the fields of immortality
My spirit should at first have worshiped thine,
A divine presence in a place divine;
Or should have moved beside it on this earth,
A shadow of that substance, from its birth:
But not as now.—I love thee; yes, I feel
That on the fountain of my heart a seal
Is set, to keep its waters pure and bright
For thee, since in those tears thou hast delight.
We—are we not formed, as notes of music are,
For one another, though dissimilar?
Such difference without discord as can make
Those sweetest sounds in which all spirits shake,
As trembling leaves in a continuous air.

Thy wisdom speaks in me, and bids me dare
Beacon the rocks on which high hearts are wrecked.
I never was attached to that great sect
Whose doctrine is that each one should select
Out of the crowd a mistress or a friend,
And all the rest, though fair and wise, commend
To cold oblivion; though it is in the code
Of modern morals, and the beaten road
Which those poor slaves with weary footsteps tread
Who travel to their home among the dead
By the broad highway of the world, and so
With one chained friend, perhaps a jealous foe,
The dreariest and the longest journey go.

True love in this differs from gold and clay,
That to divide is not to take away.
Love is like understanding, that grows bright,
Gazing on many truths; 'tis like thy light,
Imagination, which from earth and sky,
And from the depths of human fantasy,
As from a thousand prisms and mirrors, fills

The universe with glorious beams, and kills
Error the worm with many a sunlike arrow
Of its reverberated lightning. Narrow
The heart that loves, the brain that contemplates,
The life that wears, the spirit that creates,
One object and one form, and builds thereby
A sepulchre for its eternity!

Mind from its object differs most in this:
Evil from good; misery from happiness;
The base from the nobler; the impure
And frail from what is clear and must endure.
If you divide suffering or dross, you may
Diminish till it is consumed away;
If you divide pleasure and love and thought,
Each part exceeds the whole; and we know not
How much, while any yet remains unshared,
Of pleasure may be gained, of sorrow spared.
This truth is that deep well whence sages draw
The unenvied light of hope; the eternal law
By which those live to whom this world of life
Is as a garden ravaged, and whose strife
Tills for the promise of a later birth
The wilderness of this elysian earth.

There was a Being whom my spirit oft
Met on its visioned wanderings, far aloft,
In the clear golden prime of my youth's dawn,
Upon the fairy isles of sunny lawn,
Amid the enchanted mountains, and the caves
Of divine sleep, and on the air-like waves
Of wonder-level dream, whose tremulous floor
Paved her light steps. On an imagined shore,
Under the grey beak of some promontory,
She met me, robed in such exceeding glory
That I beheld her not. In solitudes
Her voice came to me through the whispering woods,
And from the fountains, and the odours deep
Of flowers, which, like lips murmuring in their sleep
Of the sweet kisses which had lulled them there,
Breathed but of her to the enamoured air;
And from the breezes whether low or loud,
And from the rain of every passing cloud,

And from the singing of the summer birds,
And from all sounds, all silence. In the words
Of antique verse and high romance—in form,
Sound, colour—in whatever checks that storm
Which with the shattered present chokes the past—
And in that best philosophy whose taste
Makes this cold common hell, our life, a doom
As glorious as a fiery martyrdom—
Her Spirit was the harmony of truth.

Then from the caverns of my dreamy youth
I sprang, as one sandalled with plumes of fire,
And towards the lodestar of my one desire
I flitted, like a dizzy moth whose flight
Is as a dead leaf's in the owlet light,
When it would seek in Hesper's setting sphere
A radiant death, a fiery sepulchre,
As if it were a lamp of earthly flame.
But she, whom prayers or tears then could not tame,
Passed, like a God throned on a winged planet,
Whose burning plumes to tenfold swiftness fan it,
Into the dreary cone of our life's shade.
And, as a man with mighty loss dismayed,
I would have followed, though the grave between
Yawned like a gulf whose spectres are unseen:
When a voice said, "O thou of hearts the weakest,
The phantom is beside thee whom thou seekest."
Then I—"Where?" The world's echo answered "where?"
And in that silence and in my despair
I questioned every tongueless wind that flew
Over my tower of mourning, if it knew
Whither 'twas fled, this soul out of my soul;
And murmured names and spells which have control
Over the sightless tyrants of our fate.
But neither prayer nor verse could dissipate
The night which closed on her; nor uncreate
That world within this chaos, mine and me,
Of which she was the veiled divinity—
The world, I say, of thoughts that worshiped her.
And therefore I went forth—with hope and fear
And every gentle passion, sick to death,
Feeding my course with expectation's breath—

Into the wintry forest of our life;
And, struggling through its error with vain strife,
And stumbling in my weakness and my haste,
And half bewildered by new forms, I passed,
Seeking among those untaught foresters
If I could find one form, resembling hers,
In which she might have masked herself from me.
There, one whose voice was venomed melody
Sate by a well, under blue nightshade bowers.
The breath of her false mouth was like faint flowers;
Her touch was as electric poison; flame
Out of her looks into my vitals came;
And from her living cheeks and bosom flew
A killing air which pierced like honey-dew
Into the core of my green heart, and lay
Upon its leaves;—until, as hair grown grey
O'er a young brow, they hid its unblown prime
With ruins of unseasonable time.

In many mortal forms I rashly sought
The shadow of that idol of my thought.
And some were fair—but beauty dies away:
Others were wise—but honeyed words betray:
And one was true—oh! why not true to me?
Then, as a hunted deer that could not flee,
I turned upon my thoughts, and stood at bay,
Wounded and weak and panting; the cold day
Trembled for pity of my strife and pain,—
When, like a noonday dawn, there shone again
Deliverance. One stood on my path who seemed
As like the glorious shape which I had dreamed
As is the Moon, whose changes ever run
Into themselves, to the eternal Sun;
The cold chaste Moon, the queen of heaven's bright isles,
Who makes all beautiful on which she smiles—
That wandering shrine of soft yet icy flame
Which ever is transformed yet still the same,
And warms not, but illumines. Young and fair
As the descended Spirit of that sphere,
She hid me, as the Moon may hide the Night
From its own darkness, until all was bright
Between the heaven and earth of my calm mind;

And, as a cloud charioted by the wind,
She led me to a cave in that wild place,
And sat beside me, with her downward face
Illumining my slumbers, like the Moon
Waxing and waning o'er Endymion.
And I was laid asleep, spirit and limb,
And all my being became bright or dim
As the Moon's image in a summer sea,
According as she smiled or frowned on me;
And there I lay within a chaste cold bed.
Alas! I then was nor alive nor dead:—
For at her silver voice came Death and Life,
Unmindful each of their accustomed strife,
Masked like twin babes, a sister and a brother,
The wandering hopes of one abandoned mother;
And through the cavern without wings they flew,
And cried, "Away! he is not of our crew."
I wept; and, though it be a dream, I weep.

What storms then shook the ocean of my sleep,
Blotting that Moon whose pale and waning lips
Then shrank as in the sickness of eclipse;
And how my soul was as a lampless sea,
And who was then its tempest; and, when she,
The planet of that hour, was quenched, what frost
Crept o'er those waters, till from coast to coast
The moving billows of my being fell
Into a death of ice, immovable;
And then what earthquakes made it gape and split,
The white Moon smiling all the while on it;—
These words conceal. If not, each word would be
The key of staunchless tears. Weep not for me!

At length, into the obscure forest came
The vision I had sought through grief and shame.
Athwart that wintry wilderness of thorns
Flashed from her motion splendour like the morn's,
And from her presence life was radiated
Through the grey earth and branches bare and dead;
So that her way was paved and roofed above
With flowers as soft as thoughts of budding love;
And music from her respiration spread
Like light,—all other sounds were penetrated

By the small, still, sweet spirit of that sound,
So that the savage winds hung mute around;
And odours warm and fresh fell from her hair,
Dissolving the dull cold in the frore air.
Soft as an incarnation of the Sun,
When light is changed to love, this glorious one
Floated into the cavern where I lay,
And called my spirit; and the dreaming clay
Was lifted by the thing that dreamed below
As smoke by fire, and in her beauty's glow
I stood, and felt the dawn of my long night
Was penetrating me with living light.
I knew it was the Vision veiled from me
So many years—that it was Emily.

Twin spheres of light who rule this passive earth,
This world of love, this *me;* and into birth
Awaken all its fruits and flowers, and dart
Magnetic might into its central heart;
And lift its billows and its mists, and guide
By everlasting laws each wind and tide
To its fit cloud and its appointed cave;
And lull its storms, each in the craggy grave
Which was its cradle, luring to faint bowers
The armies of the rainbow-winged showers;
And, as those married lights which from the towers
Of heaven look forth, and fold the wandering globe
In liquid sleep and splendour as a robe,
And all their many-mingled influence blend,
If equal yet unlike, to one sweet end,
So ye, bright regents, with alternate sway,
Govern my sphere of being, night and day—
Thou, not disdaining even a borrowed might,
Thou, not eclipsing a remoter light,—
And through the shadow of the seasons three,
From Spring to autumn's sere maturity,
Light it into the winter of the tomb,
Where it may ripen to a brighter bloom!—
Thou too, O Comet, beautiful and fierce,
Who drew'st the heart of this frail universe
Towards thine own; till, wrecked in that convulsion,
Alternating attraction and repulsion,

Thine went astray, and that was rent in twain;
Oh! float into our azure heaven again!
Be there love's folding-star at thy return!
The living Sun will feed thee from its urn
Of golden fire; the Moon will veil her horn
In thy last smiles; adoring Even and Morn
Will worship thee with incense of calm breath
And lights and shadows, as the star of death
And birth is worshiped by those sisters wild
Called Hope and Fear. Upon the heart are piled
Their offerings,—of this sacrifice divine
A world shall be the altar.

Lady mine,
Scorn not these flowers of thought, the fading birth
Which from its heart of hearts that plant puts forth
Whose fruit, made perfect by thy sunny eyes,
Will be as of the trees of paradise.

The day is come, and thou wilt fly with me!
To whatsoe'er of dull mortality
Is mine remain a vestal sister still;
To the intense, the deep, the imperishable—
Not mine, but me—henceforth be thou united,
Even as a bride, delighting and delighted.
The hour is come:—the destined star has risen
Which shall descend upon a vacant prison.
The walls are high, the gates are strong, thick set
The sentinels—but true Love never yet
Was thus constrained. It overleaps all fence:
Like lightning, with invisible violence
Piercing its continents; like heaven's free breath,
Which he who grasps can hold not; liker Death,
Who rides upon a thought, and makes his way
Through temple, tower, and palace, and the array
Of arms. More strength has Love than he or they;
For he can burst *his* charnel, and make free
The limbs in chains, the heart in agony,
The soul in dust and chaos.

Emily,
A ship is floating in the harbour now,
A wind is hovering o'er the mountain's brow.
There is a path on the sea's azure floor,—

No keel has ever ploughed that path before;
The halycons brood around the foamless isles;
The treacherous ocean has forsworn its wiles;
The merry mariners are bold and free:
Say, my heart's sister, wilt thou sail with me?
Our bark is as an albatross whose nest
Is a far Eden of the purple east;
And we between her wings will sit, while Night
And Day and Storm and Calm pursue their flight,
Our ministers, along the boundless sea,
Treading each other's heels, unheededly.
It is an isle under Ionian skies,
Beautiful as a wreck of paradise;
And, for the harbours are not safe and good,
This land would have remained a solitude
But for some pastoral people native there,
Who from the elysian, clear, and golden air
Draw the last spirit of the age of gold,—
Simple and spirited, innocent and bold.
The blue Ægean girds this chosen home,
With ever-changing sound and light and foam
Kissing the sifted sands and caverns hoar;
And all the winds wandering along the shore
Undulate with the undulating tide.
There are thick woods where sylvan forms abide;
And many a fountain, rivulet, and pond,
As clear as elemental diamond,
Or serene morning air. And far beyond,
The mossy tracks made by the goats and deer
(Which the rough shepherd treads but once a year)
Pierce into glades, caverns, and bowers, and halls
Built round with ivy, which the waterfalls
Illumining, with sound that never fails,
Accompany the noonday nightingales.
And all the place is peopled with sweet airs.
The light clear element which the isle wears
Is heavy with the scent of lemon-flowers,
Which floats like mist laden with unseen showers,
And falls upon the eyelids like faint sleep;
And from the moss violets and jonquils peep,
And dart their arrowy odour through the brain,
Till you might faint with that delicious pain.

And every motion, odour, beam, and tone,
With that deep music is in unison
Which is a soul within the soul: they seem
Like echoes of an antenatal dream.
It is an isle 'twixt heaven, air, earth, and sea,
Cradled, and hung in clear tranquillity;
Bright as that wandering Eden, Lucifer,
Washed by the soft blue oceans of young air.
It is a favoured place. Famine or blight,
Pestilence, war, and earthquake, never light
Upon its mountain-peaks; blind vultures, they
Sail onward far upon their fatal way.
The winged storms, chanting their thunder-psalm
To other lands, leave azure chasms of calm
Over this isle, or weep themselves in dew,
From which its fields and woods ever renew
Their green and golden immortality.
And from the sea there rise, and from the sky
There fall, clear exhalations, soft and bright,
Veil after veil, each hiding some delight:
Which sun or moon or zephyr draws aside,
Till the isle's beauty, like a naked bride
Glowing at once with love and loveliness,
Blushes and trembles at its own excess.
Yet, like a buried lamp, a soul no less
Burns in the heart of this delicious isle,
An atom of the Eternal, whose own smile
Unfolds itself, and may be felt not seen
O'er the grey rocks, blue waves, and forests green,
Filling their bare and void interstices.

But the chief marvel of the wilderness
Is a lone dwelling, built by whom or how
None of the rustic island-people know.
'Tis not a tower of strength, though with its height
It overtops the woods; but, for delight,
Some wise and tender Ocean-king, ere crime
Had been invented, in the world's young prime,
Reared it, a wonder of that simple time,
And envy of the isles—a pleasure-house
Made sacred to his sister and his spouse.
It scarce seems now a wreck of human art,

But, as it were, Titanic; in the heart
Of earth having assumed its form, then grown
Out of the mountains, from the living stone
Lifting itself in caverns light and high:
For all the antique and learned imagery
Has been erased, and in the place of it
The ivy and the wild vine interknit
The volumes of their many-twining stems.
Parasite flowers illume with dewy gems
The lampless halls; and, when they fade, the sky
Peeps through their winter-woof of tracery
With moonlight patches or star atoms keen,
Or fragments of the day's intense serene,
Working mosaic on their Parian floors.
And, day and night, aloof, from the high towers
And terraces, the Earth and Ocean seem
To sleep in one another's arms, and dream
Of waves, flowers, clouds, woods, rocks, and all that we
Read in their smiles, and call reality.

This isle and house are mine, and I have vowed
Thee to be lady of the solitude.
And I have fitted up some chambers there
Looking towards the golden eastern air,
And level with the living winds which flow
Like waves above the living waves below.
I have sent books and music there, and all
Those instruments with which high spirits call
The future from its cradle, and the past
Out of its grave, and make the present last
In thoughts and joys which sleep but cannot die,
Folded within their own eternity.
Our simple life wants little, and true taste
Hires not the pale drudge Luxury to waste
The scene it would adorn; and therefore still
Nature with all her children haunts the hill.
The ringdove in the embowering ivy yet
Keeps up her love-lament; and the owls flit
Round the evening tower; and the young stars glance
Between the quick bats in their twilight dance;
The spotted deer bask in the fresh moonlight
Before our gate; and the slow silent night

Is measured by the pants of their calm sleep.
Be this our home in life; and, when years heap
Their withered hours like leaves on our decay,
Let us become the overhanging day,
The living soul, of this elysian isle—
Conscious, inseparable, one. Meanwhile
We two will rise and sit and walk together
Under the roof of blue Ionian weather;
And wander in the meadows; or ascend
The mossy mountains, where the blue heavens bend
With lightest winds to touch their paramour;
Or linger where the pebble-paven shore
Under the quick faint kisses of the sea
Trembles and sparkles as with ecstacy;—
Possessing and possessed by all that is
Within that calm circumference of bliss,
And by each other, till to love and live
Be one;—or at the noontide hour arrive
Where some old cavern hoar seems yet to keep
The moonlight of the expired Night asleep,
Through which the awakened Day can never peep;
A veil for our seclusion, close as Night's,
Where secure sleep may kill thine innocent lights—
Sleep, the fresh dew of languid love, the rain
Whose drops quench kisses till they burn again.
And we will talk, until thought's melody
Become too sweet for utterance, and it die
In words, to live again in looks, which dart
With thrilling tone into the voiceless heart,
Harmonizing silence without a sound.
Our breath shall intermix, our bosoms bound,
And our veins beat together; and our lips,
With other eloquence than words, eclipse
The soul that burns between them; and the wells
Which boil under our being's inmost cells,
The fountains of our deepest life, shall be
Confused in passion's golden purity,
As mountain-springs under the morning sun.
We shall become the same, we shall be one
Spirit within two frames, oh wherefore two?
One passion in twin hearts, which grows and grew
Till, like two meteors of expanding flame,

Those spheres instinct with it become the same,
Touch, mingle, are transfigured; ever still
Burning, yet ever inconsumable;
In one another's substance finding food,
Like flames too pure and light and unimbued
To nourish their bright lives with baser prey,
Which point to heaven and cannot pass away:
One hope within two wills, one will beneath
Two overshadowing minds, one life, one death,
One heaven, one hell, one immortality,
And one annihilation!

Woe is me!
The winged words on which my soul would pierce
Into the height of Love's rare universe
Are chains of lead around its flight of fire—
I pant, I sink, I tremble, I expire!

Weak verses, go, kneel at your Sovereign's feet,
And say:—"We are the masters of thy slave;
What wouldest thou with us and ours and thine?"
Then call your sisters from Oblivion's cave,
All singing loud: "Love's very pain is sweet;
But its reward is in the world divine,
Which, if not here, it builds beyond the grave."
So shall ye live when I am there. Then haste
Over the hearts of men, until ye meet
Marina, Vanna, Primus, and the rest,
And bid them love each other, and be blessed:
And leave the troop which errs and which reproves,
And come and be my guest—for I am Love's.

ADONAIS;

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEATS.

Ἀστὴρ πρὶν μὲν ἔλαμπες ἐνὶ ζώοισιν ἑῶος.
Νῦν δὲ θανὼν λάμπεις ἔσπερος ἐν φθιμένοις.

PLATO.

PREFACE.

Φάρμακον ἦλθε Βίων ποτὶ σὸν στόμα φάρμακον εἶδες·
Πῶς τευ τοῖς χείλεσσι ποτέδραμε κοὐκ ἐγλυκάνθη;
Τίς δὲ βροτὸς τοσσοῦτον ἀνάμερος ἢ κεράσαι τοι,
Ἢ δοῦναι λαλέοντι τὸ φάρμακον; ἔκφυγεν ᾠδάν.

MOSCHUS, EPITAPH. BION.

IT is my intention to subjoin to the London edition of this poem a criticism upon the claims of its lamented object to be classed among the writers of the highest genius who have adorned our age. My known repugnance to the narrow principles of taste on which several of his earlier compositions were modelled proves at least that I am an impartial judge. I consider the fragment of *Hyperion* as second to nothing that was ever produced by a writer of the same years.

John Keats died at Rome of a consumption, in his twenty-fourth year, on the 27th of December 1820; and was buried in the romantic and lonely cemetery of the protestants in that city, under the pyramid which is the tomb of Cestius, and the massy walls and towers, now mouldering and desolate, which formed the circuit of ancient Rome. The cemetery is an open space among the ruins, covered in winter with violets and daisies. It might make one in love with death to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place.

The genius of the lamented person to whose memory I have dedicated these unworthy verses was not less delicate and fragile than it was beautiful; and, where canker-worms abound, what wonder if its young flower was blighted in the bud? The savage criticism on his *Endymion* which appeared in the *Quarterly Review* produced the most violent effect on his susceptible mind. The agitation thus originated ended in the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs; a rapid consumption ensued; and the succeeding acknowledgments, from more candid critics, of the true greatness of his powers, were ineffectual to heal the wound thus wantonly inflicted.

It may be well said that these wretched men know not what they do. They scatter their insults and their slanders without heed as to whether the poisoned shaft lights on a heart made callous by many blows, or one, like Keats's, composed of more penetrable stuff. One of their associates is, to my knowledge, a most base and unprincipled calumniator. As to *Endymion*, was it a poem, whatever might be its defects, to be treated contemptuously by those who had celebrated with various degrees of complacency and panegyric *Paris*, and *Woman*, and *A Syrian Tale*, and Mrs. Lefanu, and Mr. Barret, and Mr. Howard Payne, and a long list of the illustrious obscure? Are these the men who, in their venal good-nature, presumed to draw a parallel between the Rev. Mr. Milman and Lord Byron? What gnat did they strain at here, after having swallowed all those camels? Against what woman taken in adultery dares the foremost of these literary prostitutes to cast his opprobri-

ous stone? Miserable man! you, one of the meanest, have wantonly defaced one of the noblest, specimens of the workmanship of God. Nor shall it be your excuse that, murderer as you are, you have spoken daggers, but used none.

The circumstances of the closing scene of poor Keats's life were not made known to me until the Elegy was ready for the press. I am given to understand that the wound which his sensitive spirit had received from the criticism of *Endymion* was exasperated by the bitter sense of unrequited benefits; the poor fellow seems to have been hooted from the stage of life, no less by those on whom he had wasted the promise of his genius than those on whom he had lavished his fortune and his care. He was accompanied to Rome, and attended in his last illness, by Mr. Severn, a young artist of the highest promise, who, I have been informed, "almost risked his own life, and sacrificed every prospect to unwearied attendance upon his dying friend." Had I known these circumstances before the completion of my poem, I should have been tempted to add my feeble tribute of applause to the more solid recompense which the virtuous man finds in the recollection of his own motives. Mr. Severn can dispense with a reward from "such stuff as dreams are made of." His conduct is a golden augury of the success of his future career. May the unextinguished spirit of his illustrious friend animate the creations of his pencil, and plead against oblivion for his name!

ADONAIS.

I.

I WEEP for Adonais—he is dead!
Oh! weep for Adonais, though our tears
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head!
And thou, sad Hour selected from all years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,
And teach them thine own sorrow! Say: "With me
Died Adonais! Till the future dares
Forget the past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity."

II.

Where wert thou, mighty Mother, when he lay,
When thy son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies
In darkness? Where was lorn Urania
When Adonais died? With veilèd eyes,
'Mid listening Echoes, in her paradise
She sate, while one, with soft enamoured breath,
Rekindled all the fading melodies
With which, like flowers that mock the corse beneath,
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of Death.

III.

Oh! weep for Adonais—he is dead!
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep!—
Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep,
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;
For he is gone where all things wise and fair
Descend. Oh! dream not that the amorous deep
Will yet restore him to the vital air;
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our despair.

IV.

Most musical of mourners, weep again!
Lament anew, Urania!—He died
Who was the sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide,
Trampled and mocked with many a loathèd rite
Of lust and blood. He went unterrified
Into the gulf of death; but his clear sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth, the third among the Sons of Light.

V.

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Not all to that bright station dared to climb:
And happier they their happiness who knew,
Whose tapers yet burn through that night of time
In which suns perished. Others more sublime,
Struck by the envious wrath of man or god,
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime;
And some yet live, treading the thorny road
Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's serene abode.

VI.

But now thy youngest, dearest one has perished,
The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew,
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished,
And fed with true-love tears instead of dew.
Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,
The bloom whose petals, nipped before they blew,
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;
The broken lily lies—the storm is overpassed.

VII.

To that high Capital where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay
He came; and bought, with price of purest breath,
A grave among the eternal.—Come away!
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof, while still
He lies as if in dewy sleep he lay.
Awake him not! surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

VIII.

He will awake no more, oh never more!
Within the twilight chamber spreads apace
The shadow of white Death, and at the door
Invisible Corruption waits to trace
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place;
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to deface
So fair a prey, till darkness and the law
Of change shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain draw.

IX.

Oh weep for Adonais!—The quick Dreams,
The passion-winged ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught
The love which was its music, wander not—
Wander no more from kindling brain to brain,
But droop there whence they sprung; and mourn their lot
Round the cold hearth where, after their sweet pain,
They ne'er will gather strength or find a home again.

X.

And one with trembling hand clasps his cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries,
"Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead!
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies
A tear some Dream has loosened from his brain."
Lost angel of a ruined paradise!
She knew not 'twas her own,—as with no stain
She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain.

XI.

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs, as if embalming them;
Another clipped her profuse locks, and threw
The wreath upon him, like an anadem
Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem;
Another in her wilful grief would break
Her bow and winged reeds, as if to stem
A greater loss with one which was more weak,
And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen cheek.

XII.

Another Splendour on his mouth alit,
That mouth whence it was wont to draw the breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath
With lightning and with music: the damp death
Quenched its caress upon his icy lips;
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath
Of moonlight vapour which the cold night clips,
It flushed through his pale limbs, and passed to its eclipse.

XIII.

And others came,—Desires and Adorations,
Winged Persuasions, and veiled Destinies,
Splendours, and Glooms, and glimmering incarnations
Of Hopes and Fears, and twilight Fantasies.
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp;—the moving pomp might seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

XIV.

All he had loved, and moulded into thought
From shape and hue and odour and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watch-tower, and her hair unbound,
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,
Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle day;
Afar the melancholy Thunder moaned,
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild Winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

XV.

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those for whose disdain she pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds:—a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.

XVI.

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw down
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown,
For whom should she have waked the sullen Year?
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear,
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
Thou, Adonais; wan they stand and sere
Amid the faint companions of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears,—odour, to sighing ruth.

XVII.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale,
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain;
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain
Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
As Albion wails for thee: the curse of Cain
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest!

XVIII.

Ah woe is me! Winter is come and gone,
But grief returns with the revolving year.
The airs and streams renew their joyous tone;
The ants, the bees, the swallows, re-appear;
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Seasons' bier;
The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
And build their mossy homes in field and brere;
And the green lizard and the golden snake,
Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance awake.

XIX.

Through wood and stream and field and hill and ocean,
A quickening life from the Earth's heart has burst,
As it has ever done, with change and motion,
From the great morning of the world when first
God dawned on chaos. In its steam immersed,
The lamps of heaven flash with a softer light;
All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst,
Diffuse themselves, and spend in love's delight
The beauty and the joy of their renewèd might.

XX.

The leprous corpse, touched by this spirit tender,
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
Like incarnations of the stars, when splendour
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death,
And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath.
Nought we know dies: shall that alone which knows
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
By sightless lightning? The intense atom glows
A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose.

XXI.

Alas that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
Whence are we, and why are we? of what scene
The actors or spectators? Great and mean
Meet massed in death, who lends what life must borrow.
As long as skies are blue and fields are green,
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to sorrow.

XXII.

He will awake no more, oh never more!
"Wake thou," cried Misery, "childless Mother! Rise
Out of thy sleep, and slake in thy heart's core
A wound more fierce than his, with tears and sighs."
And all the Dreams that watched Urania's eyes,
And all the Echoes whom their Sister's song
Had held in holy silence, cried "Arise!"
Swift as a thought by the snake memory stung,
From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendour sprung.

XXIII.

She rose like an autumnal Night that springs
Out of the east, and follows wild and drear
The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
Had left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear
So struck, so roused, so rapt, Urania;
So saddened round her like an atmosphere
Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way,
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

XXIV.

Out of her secret paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with stone and steel
And human hearts, which, to her aery tread
Yielding not, wounded the invisible
Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell.
And barbèd tongues, and thoughts more sharp than they,
Rent the soft form they never could repel,
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

XXV.

In the death-chamber for a moment Death,
Shamed by the presence of that living might,
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and life's pale light
Flashed through those limbs so late her dear delight.
"Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,
As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
Leave me not!" cried Urania. Her distress
Roused Death: Death rose and smiled, and met her vain caress.

XXVI.

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again!
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live!
And in my heartless breast and burning brain
That word, that kiss, shall all thoughts else survive,
With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
Of thee, my Adonais! I would give
All that I am, to be as thou now art:—
But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart.

XXVII.

"O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men
Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart
Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?
Defenceless as thou wert, oh! where was then
Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?—
Or, hadst thou waited the full cycle when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,
The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

XXVIII.

"The herded wolves bold only to pursue,
The obscene ravens clamorous o'er the dead,
The vultures to the conqueror's banner true,
Who feed where desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion,—how they fled,
When, like Apollo from his golden bow,
The Pythian of the age one arrow sped,
And smiled!—The spoilers tempt no second blow,
They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.

XXIX.

"The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn,
And the immortal stars awake again.
So is it in the world of living men:
A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven; and, when
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night."

XXX.

Thus ceased she: and the Mountain Shepherds came,
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent.
The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame
Over his living head like heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument,
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song
In sorrow. From her wilds Ierne sent
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,
And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.

XXXI.

'Midst others of less note came one frail form,
A phantom among men, companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell. He, as I guess,
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness
Actæon-like; and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,
And his own thoughts along that rugged way
Pursued like raging hounds their father and their prey.

XXXII.

A pard-like Spirit beautiful and swift—
A love in desolation masked—a power
Girt round with weakness; it can scarce uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour.
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,
A breaking billow;—even whilst we speak
Is it not broken? On the withering flower
The killing sun smiles brightly: on a cheek
The life can burn in blood even while the heart may break.

XXXIII.

His head was bound with pansies overblown,
And faded violets, white and pied and blue;
And a light spear topped with a cypress cone,
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy-tresses grew
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew,
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasped it. Of that crew
He came the last, neglected and apart;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's dart.

XXXIV.

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears. Well knew that gentle band
Who in another's fate now wept his own.
As in the accents of an unknown land
He sang new sorrow, sad Urania scanned
The Stranger's mien, and murmured "Who art thou?"
He answered not, but with a sudden hand
Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,
Which was like Cain's or Christ's—Oh! that it should be so!

46828

XXXV.

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,
In mockery of monumental stone,
The heavy heart heaving without a moan?
If it be he who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honoured, the departed one,
Let me not vex with inharmonious sighs
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

XXXVI.

Our Adonais has drunk poison—oh!
What deaf and viperous murderer could crown
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?
The nameless worm would now itself disown;
It felt, yet could escape, the magic tone
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and wrong,
But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre unstrung.

XXXVII.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame!
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name!
But be thyself, and know thyself to be!
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow:
Remorse and self-contempt shall cling to thee,
Hot shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt—as now.

XXXVIII.

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion-kites that scream below.
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now.
Dust to the dust: but the pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the same,
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of shame.

XXXIX.

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep!
He hath awakened from the dream of life.
'Tis we who, lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance strike with our spirit's knife
Invulnerable nothings. *We* decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

XL.

He has outsoared the shadow of our night.
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again.
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure; and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown grey, in vain—
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

XLI.

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead, not he;
Mourn not for Adonais.—Thou young Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone!
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains! and, thou Air,
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair!

XLII.

He is made one with Nature. There is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder to the song of night's sweet bird.
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone;
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own,
Which wields the world with never-wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

XLIII.

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely. He doth bear
His part, while the One Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world; compelling there
All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing the unwilling dross, that checks its flight,
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear;
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the heaven's light.

XLIV.

The splendours of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb,
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there,
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

XLV.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal thought
Far in the unapparent. Chatterton
Rose pale, his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he fought,
And as he fell, and as he lived and loved,
Sublimely mild, a spirit without spot,
Arose; and Lucan, by his death approved;—
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reproved.

XLVI.

And many more, whose names on earth are dark,
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.
"Thou art become as one of us," they cry;
"It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid an heaven of song.
Assume thy winged throne, thou Vesper of our throng!"

XLVII.

Who mourns for Adonais? Oh! come forth,
Fond wretch, and know thyself and him aright.
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous earth;
As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Satiate the void circumference: then shrink
Even to a point within our day and night;
And keep thy heart light, lest it make thee sink,
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the brink.

XLVIII.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre,
Oh not of him, but of our joy. 'Tis nought
That ages, empires, and religions, there
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;
For such as he can lend—they borrow not
Glory from those who made the world their prey;
And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

XLIX.

Go thou to Rome,—at once the paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness;
And where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,
And flowering weeds and fragrant copses dress
The bones of Desolation's nakedness,
Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access,
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread.

L.

And grey walls moulder round, on which dull Time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath
A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in heaven's smile their camp of death,
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath.

LI.

Here pause. These graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each; and, if the seal is set
Here on one fountain of a mourning mind,
Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou find
Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is why fear we to become?

LII.

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light for ever shines, earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments.—Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek!
Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music,—words are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

LIII.

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my heart?
Thy hopes are gone before: from all things here
They have departed; thou shouldst now depart!
A light is past from the revolving year,
And man and woman; and what still is dear
Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles, the low wind whispers near:
'Tis Adonais calls! Oh! hasten thither!
No more let life divide what death can join together.

LIV.

That light whose smile kindles the universe,
That beauty in which all things work and move,
That benediction which the eclipsing curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love
Which, through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst, now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

LV.

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given.
The massy earth and sphered skies are riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar!
Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

HELLAS;

A LYRICAL DRAMA.

ΜΑΝΤΙΣ 'ΕΙΜ' 'ΕΣΘΛΩΝ 'ΑΓΩΝΩΝ.

ŒDIP. COLON.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY
PRINCE ALEXANDER MAVROCORDATO,
LATE SECRÈTARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO THE HOSPODAR OF WALLACHIA,
THE DRAMA OF HELLAS IS INSCRIBED,
AS AN IMPERFECT TOKEN OF THE ADMIRATION, SYMPATHY, AND FRIENDSHIP, OF THE AUTHOR.

PISA, *November* 1, 1821.

PREFACE.

THE poem of *Hellas*, written at the suggestion of the events of the moment, is a mere improvise, and derives its interest (should it be found to possess any) solely from the intense sympathy which the author feels with the cause he would celebrate.

The subject, in its present state, is insusceptible of being treated otherwise than lyrically; and, if I have called this poem a drama from the circumstance of its being composed in dialogue, the license is not greater than that which has been assumed by other poets who have called their productions epics only because they have been divided into twelve or twenty-four books.

The *Persæ* of Æschylus afforded me the first model of my conception, although

the decision of the glorious contest now waging in Greece being yet suspended forbids a catastrophe parallel to the return of Xerxes and the desolation of the Persians. I have therefore contented myself with exhibiting a series of lyric pictures, and with having wrought upon the curtain of futurity, which falls upon the unfinished scene, such figures of indistinct and visionary delineation as suggest the final triumph of the Greek cause, as a portion of the cause of civilization and social improvement.

The drama (if drama it must be called) is, however, so inartificial that I doubt whether, if recited on the Thespian waggon to an Athenian village at the Dionysiaca, it would have obtained the prize of the goat. I shall bear with equanimity any punishment, greater than the loss of such a reward, which the Aristarchi of the hour may think fit to inflict.

The only *goat-song* which I have yet attempted has, I confess, in spite of the unfavourable nature of the subject, received a greater and a more valuable portion of applause than I expected, or than it deserved.

Common fame is the only authority which I can allege for the details which form the basis of the poem, and I must trespass upon the forgiveness of my readers for the display of newspaper erudition to which I have been reduced. Undoubtedly, until the conclusion of the war, it will be impossible to obtain an account of it sufficiently authentic for historical materials; but poets have their privilege, and it is unquestionable that actions of the most exalted courage have been performed by the Greeks—that they have gained more than one naval victory—and that their defeat in Wallachia was signalized by circumstances of heroism more glorious even than victory.

The apathy of the rulers of the civilized world to the astonishing circumstance of the descendants of that nation to which they owe their civilization rising as it were from the ashes of their ruin is something perfectly inexplicable to a mere spectator of the shows of this mortal scene. We are all Greeks. Our laws, our literature, our religion, our arts, have their root in Greece. But for Greece—Rome, the instructor, the conqueror, or the metropolis, of our ancestors, would have spread no illumination with her arms, and we might still have been savages and idolaters; or, what is worse, might have arrived at such a stagnant and miserable state of social institutions as China and Japan possess.

The human form and the human mind attained to a perfection in Greece which has impressed its image on those faultless productions whose very fragments are the despair of modern art; and has propagated impulses which cannot cease, through a thousand channels of manifest or imperceptible operation, to ennoble and delight mankind until the extinction of the race.

The modern Greek is the descendant of those glorious beings whom the imagination almost refuses to figure to itself as belonging to our kind; and he inherits much of their sensibility, their rapidity of conception, their enthusiasm, and their courage. If in many instances he is degraded by moral and political slavery to the practice of the basest vices it engenders, and that below the level of ordinary degradation; let us reflect that the corruption of the best produces the worst, and that habits which subsist only in relation to a peculiar state of social institution may be expected to cease as soon as that relation is dissolved. In fact, the Greeks, since the admirable novel of *Anastatius* could have been a faithful picture of their manners, have undergone most important changes; the flower of their youth, returning to their country from the universities of Italy, Germany, and France, have communicated to their fellow-citizens the latest results of that social perfection of which their ancestors were the original source. The university of Chios contained, before the breaking-out of the revolution, eight hundred students, and among them several Germans and Americans. The munificence and energy of many of the Greek princes and merchants, directed to the renovation of their country with a spirit and a wisdom which have few examples, are above all praise.

The English permit their own oppressors to act according to their natural sympathy with the Turkish tyrant, and to brand upon their name the indelible blot of an alliance with the enemies of domestic happiness, of Christianity, and civilization.

Russia desires to possess, not to liberate, Greece; and is contented to see the Turks, its natural enemies, and the Greeks, its intended slaves, enfeeble each other, until one or both fall into its net. The wise and generous policy of England would have consisted in establishing the independence of Greece, and in maintaining it both against Russia and the Turk;—but when was the oppressor generous or just?

The Spanish Peninsula is already free. France is tranquil in the enjoyment of a partial exemption from the abuses which its unnatural and feeble government is vainly attempting to revive. The seed of blood and misery has been sown in Italy, and a more vigorous race is arising to go forth to the harvest. The world waits only the news of a revolution of Germany, to see the tyrants who have pinnacled themselves on its supineness precipitated into the ruin from which they shall never arise. Well do these destroyers of mankind know their enemy, when they impute the insurrection in Greece to the same spirit before which they tremble throughout the rest of Europe; and that enemy well knows the power and the cunning of its opponents, and watches the moment of their approaching weakness and inevitable division, to wrest the bloody sceptres from their grasp.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MAHMUD. | DAOOD.
HASSAN. | AHASUERUS, *a Jew.*

CHORUS *of Greek Captive Women. The Phantom of Mahomet the Second. Messengers, Slaves, and Attendants.*

SCENE—*Constantinople.* TIME—*Sunset.*

SCENE, *a Terrace on the Seraglio.*

MAHMUD, *sleeping; an Indian Slave sitting beside his Couch.*

CHORUS OF GREEK CAPTIVE WOMEN.

WE strew these opiate flowers
On thy restless pillow,—
They were stripped from orient bowers,
By the Indian billow.
Be thy sleep
Calm and deep,
Like theirs who fell—not ours who weep!

INDIAN.

Away, unlovely dreams!
Away, false shapes of sleep!
Be his, as heaven seems,
Clear and bright and deep,
Soft as love, and calm as death,
Sweet as a summer night without a breath!

CHORUS.

Sleep, sleep! Our song is laden
With the soul of slumber;
It was sung by a Samian maiden
Whose lover was of the number
Who now keep
That calm sleep
Whence none may wake, where none shall weep.

INDIAN.

I touch thy temples pale;
I breathe my soul on thee:
And, could my prayers avail,
All my joy should be
Dead, and I would live to weep,
So thou mightst win one hour of quiet sleep.

CHORUS.

Breathe low, low,
The spell of the mighty Mistress now!
When Conscience lulls her sated snake,
And tyrants sleep, let Freedom wake.
Breathe low, low,
The words which, like secret fire, shall flow
Through the veins of the frozen earth—low, low!

SEMICHORUS I.

Life may change, but it may fly not:
Hope may vanish, but can die not;
Truth be veiled, but still it burneth;
Love repulsed, but it returneth.

SEMICHORUS II.

Yet were life a charnel where
Hope lay coffined with Despair;
Yet were truth a sacred lie;
Love were lust—

SEMICHORUS I.

If Liberty
Lent not life its soul of light,
Hope its iris of delight,
Truth its prophet's robe to wear,
Love its power to give and bear.

CHORUS.

In the great morning of the world,
The Spirit of God with might unfurled
The flag of Freedom over chaos,
  And all its banded anarchs fled,
Like vultures frighted from Imaus
    Before an earthquake's tread.—
So from Time's tempestuous dawn
Freedom's splendour burst and shone:
Thermopylæ and Marathon
Caught, like mountains beacon-lighted,
  The springing fire. The wingèd glory
On Philippi half alighted,
  Like an eagle on a promontory.
Its unwearied wings could fan
The quenchless ashes of Milan.
From age to age, from man to man,
It lived; and lit from land to land
Florence, Albion, Switzerland.
Then night fell; and, as from night,
Re-assuming fiery flight,
From the west swift freedom came,
  Against the course of heaven and doom,
A second sun arrayed in flame,
  To burn, to kindle, to illume.
From far Atlantis its young beams
Chased the shadows and the dreams.
France, with all her sanguine steams,
Hid, but quenched it not; again
Through clouds its shafts of glory rain
From utmost Germany to Spain.
As an eagle fed with morning
Scorns the embattled tempest's warning
When she seeks her aerie hanging
  In the mountain-cedar's hair,
And her brood expect the clanging
  Of her wings through the wild air,
Sick with famine; Freedom so
To what of Greece remaineth now
Returns. Her hoary ruins glow
Like orient mountains lost in day;
  Beneath the safety of her wings

Her renovated nurslings play,
And in the naked lightenings
Of truth they purge their dazzled eyes.
Let Freedom leave, where'er she flies,
A desert, or a paradise;
Let the beautiful and the brave
Share her glory, or a grave!

SEMICHORUS I.

With the gifts of gladness
Greece did thy cradle strew.

SEMICHORUS II.

With the tears of sadness
Greece did thy shroud bedew.

SEMICHORUS I.

With an orphan's affection
She followed thy bier through time:

SEMICHORUS II.

And at thy resurrection
Re-appeareth, like thou, sublime.

SEMICHORUS I.

If heaven should resume thee,
To heaven shall her spirit ascend.

SEMICHORUS II.

If hell should entomb thee,
To hell shall her high hearts bend.

SEMICHORUS I.

If annihilation—

SEMICHORUS II.

Dust let her glories be;
And a name and a nation
Be forgotten, Freedom, with thee!

INDIAN.

His brow grows darker—Breathe not—move not!
He starts—he shudders. Ye, that love not,
With your panting loud and fast
Have awakened him at last.
Mahmud (*starting from his sleep*). Man the Seraglio-guard!
make fast the gate!
What! from a cannonade of three short hours?
'Tis false! that breach towards the Bosphorus

Cannot be practicable yet.—Who stirs?
Stand to the match; that, when the foe prevails,
One spark may mix in reconciling ruin
The conqueror and the conquered! Heave the tower
Into the gap—wrench off the roof!

Enter HASSAN.

Ha! what!
The truth of day lightens upon my dream,
And I am Mahmud still.

Hassan. Your Sublime Highness
Is strangely moved.

Mahmud. The times do cast strange shadows
On those who watch, and who must rule their course
Lest they, being first in peril as in glory,
Be whelmed in the fierce ebb:—and these are of them.
Thrice has a gloomy vision hunted me
As thus from sleep into the troubled day;
It shakes me as the tempest shakes the sea,
Leaving no figure upon memory's glass.
Would that . . . no matter. Thou didst say, thou knewest
A Jew whose spirit is a chronicle
Of strange and secret and forgotten things.
I bade thee summon him:—'tis said his tribe
Dream, and are wise interpreters of dreams.

Hassan. The Jew of whom I spake is old—so old
He seems to have outlived a world's decay;
The hoary mountains and the wrinkled ocean
Seem younger still than he. His hair and beard
Are whiter than the tempest-sifted snow;
His cold pale limbs and pulseless arteries
Are like the fibres of a cloud instinct
With light, and, to the soul that quickens them,
Are as the atoms of the mountain-drift
To the winter wind. But from his eye looks forth
A life of unconsumèd thought which pierces
The present, and the past, and the to-come.
Some say that this is he whom the great prophet
Jesus the son of Joseph, for his mockery,
Mocked with the curse of immortality.
Some feign that he is Enoch. Others dream
He was præ-Adamite, and has survived
Cycles of generation and of ruin.

The sage, in truth, by dreadful abstinence,
And conquering penance of the mutinous flesh,
Deep contemplation and unwearied study,
In years outstretched beyond the date of man,
May have attained to sovereignty and science
Over those strong and secret things and thoughts
Which others fear and know not.

Mahmud. I would talk
With this old Jew.

Hassan. Thy will is even now
Made known to him where he dwells in a sea-cavern
'Mid the Demonesi, less accessible
Than thou or God. He who would question him
Must sail alone at sunset where the stream
Of ocean sleeps around those foamless isles,
When the young moon is westering as now,
And evening airs wander upon the wave.
And, when the pines of that bee-pasturing isle,
Green Erebinthus, quench the fiery shadow
Of his gilt prow within the sapphire water,
Then must the lonely helmsman cry aloud
"Ahasuerus!" and the caverns round
Will answer "Ahasuerus!" If his prayer
Be granted, a faint meteor will arise,
Lighting him over Marmora; and a wind
Will rush out of the sighing pine-forest,
And with the wind a storm of harmony
Unutterably sweet, and pilot him
Through the soft twilight to the Bosphorus.
Thence, at the hour and place and circumstance
Fit for the matter of their conference,
The Jew appears. Few dare, and few who dare
Win the desired communion . . . . But that shout
Bodes— [*A shout within.*

Mahmud. Evil, doubtless; like all human sounds.
Let me converse with spirits.

Hassan. That shout again!

Mahmud. This Jew whom thou hast summoned—

Hassan. Will be here—

Mahmud. When the omnipotent hour to which are yoked
He, I, and all things, shall compel:—enough.
Silence those mutineers—that drunken crew

That crowd about the pilot in the storm.
Ay, strike the foremost shorter by a head.
They weary me, and I have need of rest.
Kings are like stars: they rise and set, they have
The worship of the world, but no repose. [*Exeunt severally.*

CHORUS.

Worlds on worlds are rolling ever
From creation to decay,
Like the bubbles on a river,
Sparkling, bursting, borne away.
But they are still immortal
Who, through birth's orient portal
And death's dark chasm hurrying to and fro,
Clothe their unceasing flight
In the brief dust and light
Gathered around their chariots as they go:
New shapes they still may weave,
New gods, new laws, receive:
Bright or dim are they, as the robes they last
On Death's bare ribs had cast.

A Power from the unknown God,
A Promethean Conqueror, came;
Like a triumphal path he trod
The thorns of death and shame.
A mortal shape to him
Was like the vapour dim
Which the orient planet animates with light.
Hell, sin, and slavery, came,
Like bloodhounds mild and tame,
Nor preyed until their lord had taken flight.
The moon of Mahomet
Arose, and it shall set:
While, blazoned as on heaven's immortal noon,
The cross leads generations on.

Swift as the radiant shapes of sleep
From one whose dreams are paradise
Fly, when the fond wretch wakes to weep,
And Day peers forth with her blank eyes;
So fleet, so faint, so fair,
The Powers of Earth and Air
Fled from the folding-star of Bethlehem:

Apollo, Pan, and Love,
And even Olympian Jove,
Grew weak, for killing Truth had glared on them.
Our hills and seas and streams,
Dispeopled of their dreams,
Their waters turned to blood, their dew to tears,
Wailed for the golden years.

Enter MAHMUD, HASSAN, DAOOD, *and others.*

Mahmud. More gold? Our ancestors bought gold with victory,
And shall I sell it for defeat?
Daood. The Janizars
Clamour for pay.
Mahmud. Go bid them pay themselves
With Christian blood! Are there no Grecian virgins
Whose shrieks and spasms and tears they may enjoy?
No infidel children to impale on spears?
No hoary priests after that Patriarch
Who bent the curse against his country's heart,
Which clove his own at last? Go bid them kill:
Blood is the seed of gold.
Daood. It has been sown,
And yet the harvest to the sicklemen
Is as a grain to each.
Mahmud. Then take this signet:
Unlock the seventh chamber, in which lie
The treasures of victorious Solyman,
An empire's spoils stored for a day of ruin:
O spirit of my sires! is it not come?
The prey-birds and the wolves are gorged and sleep;
But these, who spread *their* feast on the red earth,
Hunger for gold, which fills not.—See them fed;
Then lead them to the rivers of fresh death. [*Exit* DAOOD.
Oh! miserable dawn, after a night
More glorious than the day which it usurped!
O faith in God! O power on earth! O word
Of the great Prophet, whose o'ershadowing wings
Darkened the thrones and idols of the west,
Now bright!—for thy sake cursèd be the hour,
Even as a father by an evil child,
When the orient moon of Islam rolled in triumph
From Caucasus to white Ceraunia!

Ruin above, and anarchy below;
Terror without, and treachery within;
The chalice of destruction full, and all
Thirsting to drink; and who among us dares
To dash it from his lips? and where is hope?
Hassan. The lamp of our dominion still rides high;
One God is God—Mahomet is his Prophet.
Four hundred thousand Moslems, from the limits
Of utmost Asia, irresistibly
Throng, like full clouds at the sirocco's cry,
But not, like them, to weep their strength in tears;
They bear destroying lightning, and their step
Wakes earthquake, to consume and overwhelm,
And reign in ruin. Phrygian Olympus,
Tmolus, and Latmos, and Mycale, roughen
With horrent arms; and lofty ships even now,
Like vapours anchored to a mountain's edge,
Freighted with fire and whirlwind, wait at Scala
The convoy of the ever-veering wind.
Samos is drunk with blood;—the Greek has paid
Brief victory with swift loss and long despair.
The false Moldavian serfs fled fast and far
When the fierce shout of Allah-illa-Allah
Rose like the war-cry of the northern wind,
Which kills the sluggish clouds, and leaves a flock
Of wild swans struggling with the naked storm:
So were the lost Greeks on the Danube's day!
If night is mute, yet the returning sun
Kindles the voices of the morning birds;
Nor at thy bidding less exultingly
Than birds rejoicing in the golden day
The Anarchies of Africa unleash
Their tempest-winged cities of the sea,
To speak in thunder to the rebel world.
Like sulphurous clouds half-shattered by the storm,
They sweep the pale Ægean; while the Queen
Of Ocean, bound upon her island throne
Far in the west, sits mourning that her sons,
Who frown on freedom, spare a smile for thee.
Russia still hovers, as an eagle might
Within a cloud near which a kite and crane
Hang tangled in inextricable fight,

To stoop upon the victor; for she fears
The name of freedom, even as she hates thine.
But recreant Austria loves thee as the grave
Loves pestilence, and her slow dogs of war,
Fleshed with the chase, come up from Italy,
And howl upon their limits: for they see
The panther freedom fled to her old cover
Amid seas and mountains, and a mightier brood
Crouch round. What anarch wears a crown or mitre,
Or bears the sword, or grasps the key of gold,
Whose friends are not thy friends, whose foes thy foes?
Our arsenals and our armouries are full;
Our forts defy assault; ten thousand cannon
Lie ranged upon the beach, and hour by hour
Their earth-convulsing wheels affright the city;
The galloping of fiery steeds makes pale
The Christian merchant, and the yellow Jew
Hides his hoard deeper in the faithless earth.
Like clouds, and like the shadows of the clouds,
Over the hills of Anatolia,
Swift in wide troops the Tartar chivalry
Sweep;—the far-flashing of their starry lances
Reverberates the dying light of day.
We have one God, one king, one hope, one law;
But many-headed Insurrection stands
Divided in itself, and soon must fall.

Mahmud. Proud words, when deeds come short, are seasonable!
Look, Hassan, on yon crescent moon emblazoned
Upon that shattered flag of fiery cloud
Which leads the rear of the departing day,
Wan emblem of an empire fading now.
See how it trembles in the bloodred air,
And, like a mighty lamp whose oil is spent,
Shrinks on the horizon's edge; while, from above,
One star with insolent and victorious light
Hovers above its fall, and with keen beams,
Like arrows through a fainting antelope,
Strikes its weak form to death.

Hassan. Even as that moon
Renews itself——

Mahmud. Shall we be not renewed!
Far other bark than ours were needed now

To stem the torrent of descending time.
The Spirit that lifts the slave before his lord
Stalks through the capitals of armèd kings,
And spreads his ensign in the wilderness;
Exults in chains; and, when the rebel falls,
Cries like the blood of Abel from the dust;—
And the inheritors of earth, like beasts
When earthquake is unleashed, with idiot fear
Cower in their kingly dens—as I do now.
What were defeat, when victory must appall!
Or danger, when security looks pale!
How said the messenger who, from the fort
Islanded in the Danube, saw the battle
Of Bucharest?—that—

Hassan. Ibrahim's scimitar
Drew with its gleam swift victory from heaven,
To burn before him in the night of battle—
A light and a destruction.

Mahmud. Ay, the day
Was ours; but how?

Hassan. The light Wallachians,
The Arnaut, Servian, and Albanian allies,
Fled from the glance of our artillery
Almost before the thunderstone alit;
One half the Grecian army made a bridge
Of safe and slow retreat, with Moslem dead;
The other—

Mahmud. Speak—tremble not—

Hassan. Islanded
By victor myriads, formed in hollow square
With rough and steadfast front, and thrice flung back
The deluge of our foaming cavalry;
Thrice their keen wedge of battle pierced our lines,
Our baffled army trembled like one man
Before a host, and gave them space; but soon
From the surrounding hills the batteries blazed,
Kneading them down with fire and iron rain.
Yet none approached; till, like a field of corn
Under the hook of the swart sickleman,
The band, intrenched in mounds of Turkish dead,
Grew weak and few. Then said the Pacha, "Slaves,
Render yourselves—they have abandoned you—

What hope of refuge or retreat or aid?
We grant your lives."—"Grant that which is thine own,"
Cried one, and fell upon his sword, and died.
Another—"God, man, hope, abandon me;
But I to them and to myself remain
Constant;" he bowed his head, and his heart burst.
A third exclaimed: "There is a refuge, tyrant,
Where thou darest not pursue, and canst not harm
Shouldst thou pursue; there we shall meet again:"
Then held his breath, and after a brief spasm
The indignant spirit cast its mortal garment
Among the slain—dead earth upon the earth.
So these survivors, each by different ways,
Some strange, all sudden, none dishonourable,
Met in triumphant death. And, when our army
Closed in—while yet wonder and awe and shame
Held back the base hyænas of the battle
That feed upon the dead, and fly the living—
One rose out of the chaos of the slain.
And if it were a corpse which some dread spirit
Of the old saviours of the land we rule
Had lifted in its anger, wandering by;
Or if there burned within the dying man
Unquenchable disdain of death, and faith
Creating what it feigned; I cannot tell:
But he cried, "Phantoms of the free, we come!
Armies of the eternal, ye who strike
To dust the citadels of sanguine kings,
And shake the souls throned on their stony hearts,
And thaw their frostwork diadems like dew!
O ye who float around this clime, and weave
The garment of the glory which it wears;
Whose fame, though earth betray the dust it clasped,
Lies sepulchred in monumental thought!
Progenitors of all that yet is great!
Ascribe to your bright senate, oh accept
In your high ministrations, us your sons—
Us first, and the more glorious yet to come!
And ye, weak conquerors! giants who look pale
When the crushed worm rebels beneath your tread!
The vultures and the dogs, your pensioners tame,
Are overgorged; but, like oppressors, still

They crave the relic of Destruction's feast.
The exhalations and the thirsty winds
Are sick with blood; the dew is foul with death;
Heaven's light is quenched in slaughter. Thus where'er
Upon your camps, cities, or towers, or fleets,
The obscene birds the reeking remnants cast
Of these dead limbs, upon your streams and mountains,
Upon your fields, your gardens, and your housetops,
Where'er the winds shall creep, or the clouds fly,
Or the dews fall, or the angry sun look down
With poisoned light—Famine and Pestilence
And Panic shall wage war upon our side.
Nature from all her boundaries is moved
Against ye: Time has found ye light as foam.
The earth rebels; and Good and Evil stake
Their empire o'er the unborn world of men
On this one cast. But, ere the die be thrown,
The renovated genius of our race,
Proud umpire of the impious game, descends,
A seraph-winged Victory bestriding
The tempest of the Omnipotence of God,
Which sweeps all things to their appointed doom,
And you to oblivion!"—More he would have said,
But—

Mahmud. Died—as thou shouldst ere thy lips had painted
Their ruin in the hues of our success!
A rebel's crime, gilt with a rebel's tongue!
Thy heart is Greek, Hassan.

Hassan. It may be so:
A spirit not my own wrenched me within,
And I have spoken words I fear and hate;
Yet would I die for—

Mahmud. Live! oh live! outlive
Me and this sinking empire.—But the fleet—

Hassan. Alas!

Mahmud. The fleet which, like a flock of clouds
Chased by the wind, flies the insurgent banner!
Our winged castles from their merchant ships!
Our myriads before their weak pirate bands!
Our arms before their chains! our years of empire
Before their centuries of servile fear!
Death is awake! Repulsed on the waters!

They own no more the thunder-bearing banner
Of Mahmud; but, like hounds of a base breed,
Gorge from a stranger's hand, and rend their master.
Hassan. Latmos and Ampelos and Phanae saw
The wreck—
Mahmud. The caves of the Icarian isles
Told each to the other in loud mockery,
And with the tongue as of a thousand echoes,
First of the sea-convulsing fight—and then——
Thou darest to speak: senseless are the mountains,
Interpret thou their voice.
Hassan. My presence bore
A part in that day's shame. The Grecian fleet
Bore down at daybreak from the north, and hung
As multitudinous on the ocean line
As cranes upon the cloudless Thracian wind.
Our squadron, convoying ten thousand men,
Was stretching towards Nauplia when the battle
Was kindled.—
First through the hail of our artillery
The agile Hydriote barks with press of sail
Dashed:—ship to ship, cannon to cannon, man
To man, were grappled in the embrace of war,
Inextricable but by death or victory.
The tempest of the raging fight convulsed
To its crystalline depths that stainless sea,
And shook heaven's roof of golden morning clouds
Poised on an hundred azure mountain-isles.
In the brief trances of the artillery,
One cry from the destroyed and the destroyer
Rose, and a cloud of desolation wrapped
The unforeseen event, till the north wind
Sprung from the sea, lifting the heavy veil
Of battle-smoke—then "Victory—victory!"
For, as we thought, three frigates from Algiers
Bore down from Naxos to our aid. But soon
The abhorrèd cross glimmered behind, before,
Among, around, us: and that fatal sign
Dried with its beams the strength of Moslem hearts,
As the sun drinks the dew.—What more? We fled!
Our noonday path over the sanguine foam
Was beaconed (and the glare struck the sun pale)

By our consuming transports; the fierce light
Made all the shadows of our sails blood-red,
And every countenance blank. Some ships lay feeding
The ravening fire even to the water's level;
Some were blown up; some, settling heavily,
Sunk; and the shrieks of our companions died
Upon the wind that bore us fast and far,
Even after they were dead. Nine thousand perished!
We met the vultures, legioned in the air,
Stemming the torrent of the tainted wind:
They, screaming from their cloudy mountain peaks,
Stooped through the sulphurous battle-smoke, and perched
Each on the weltering carcase that we loved,
Like its ill angel or its damnèd soul,
Riding upon the bosom of the sea.
We saw the dogfish hastening to their feast.
Joy waked the voiceless people of the sea;
And ravening Famine left his ocean-cave
To dwell with War, with us, and with Despair.
We met night three hours to the west of Patmos,
And, with night, tempest—

Mahmud. Cease!

Enter a Messenger.

Messenger. Your Sublime Highness,
That Christian hound the Muscovite Ambassador
Has left the city. If the rebel fleet
Had anchored in the port, had victory
Crowned the Greek legions in the Hippodrome,
Panic were tamer! Obedience and Mutiny,
Like giants in contention planet-struck,
Stand gazing on each other.—There is peace
In Stamboul.

Mahmud. Is the grave not calmer still?
Its ruins shall be mine!

Hassan. Fear not the Russian;
The tiger leagues not with the stag at bay
Against the hunter. Cunning, base, and cruel,
He crouches, watching till the spoil be won;
And must be paid for his reserve, in blood.
After the war is fought, yield the sleek Russian
That which thou canst not keep, his deserved portion

Of blood, which shall not flow through streets and fields,
Rivers and seas, like that which we may win,
But stagnate in the veins of Christian slaves!

Enter Second Messenger.

Second Messenger. Nauplia, Tripolizza, Mothon, Athens,
Navarin, Artas, Monembasia,
Corinth, and Thebes, are carried by assault;
And every Islamite who made his dogs
Fat with the flesh of Galilean slaves
Passed at the edge of the sword. The lust of blood,
Which made our warriors drunk, is quenched in death;
But like a fiery plague breaks out anew
In deeds which make the Christian cause look pale
In its own light. The garrison of Patras
Has store but for ten days, nor is there hope
But from the Briton. At once slave and tyrant,
His wishes still are weaker than his fears,
Or he would sell what faith may yet remain
From the oaths broke in Genoa and in Norway;
And, if you buy him not, your treasury
Is empty even of promises—his own coin.
The freedman of a western poet-chief
Holds Attica with seven thousand rebels,
And has beat back the pacha of Negropont.
The aged Ali sits in Yanina,
A crownless metaphor of empire;
His name, that shadow of his withered might,
Holds our besieging army, like a spell,
In prey to famine, pest, and mutiny:
He, bastioned in his citadel, looks forth
Joyless upon the sapphire lake that mirrors
The ruins of the city where he reigned,
Childless and sceptreless. The Greek has reaped
The costly harvest his own blood matured,—
Not the sower, Ali, who has bought a truce
From Ypsilanti, with ten camel-loads
Of Indian gold.

Enter a Third Messenger.

Mahmud. What more?

Third Messenger. The Christian tribes
Of Lebanon and the Syrian wilderness
Are in revolt; Damascus, Hems, Aleppo,

Tremble; the Arab menaces Medina;
The Ethiop has entrenched himself in Sennaar,
And keeps the Egyptian rebel well employed,
Who denies homage, claims investiture
As price of tardy aid. Persia demands
The cities on the Tigris, and the Georgians
Refuse their living tribute. Crete and Cyprus,
Like mountain-twins that from each other's veins
Catch the volcano-fire and earthquake spasm,
Shake in the general fever. Through the city,
Like birds before a storm, the Santons shriek,
And prophesyings horrible and new
Are heard among the crowd; that sea of men
Sleeps on the wrecks it made, breathless and still.
A Dervise learned in the koran preaches
That it is written how the sins of Islam
Must raise up a destroyer even now.
The Greeks expect a Saviour from the west;
Who shall not come, men say, in clouds and glory,
But in the omnipresence of that Spirit
In which all live and are. Ominous signs
Are blazoned broadly on the noonday sky.
One saw a red cross stamped upon the sun;
It has rained blood; and monstrous births declare
The secret wrath of Nature and her Lord.
The army encamped upon the Cydaris
Was roused last night by the alarm of battle,
And saw two hosts conflicting in the air,—
The shadows doubtless of the unborn time
Cast on the mirror of the night: while yet
The fight hung balanced, there arose a storm
Which swept the phantoms from among the stars.
At the third watch, the Spirit of the Plague
Was heard abroad flapping among the tents:
Those who relieved watch found the sentinels dead.
The last news from the camp is that a thousand
Have sickened, and—

Enter a Fourth Messenger.

Mahmud. And thou, pale ghost, dim shadow
Of some untimely rumour, speak!

Fourth Messenger. One comes

Fainting with toil, covered with foam and blood.
He stood, he says, upon Chelonites'
Promontory, which o'erlooks the isles that groan
Under the Briton's frown, and all their waters
Then trembling in the splendour of the moon;
When, as the wandering clouds unveiled or hid
Her boundless light, he saw two adverse fleets
Stalk through the night in the horizon's glimmer,
Mingling fierce thunders and sulphureous gleams,
And smoke which strangled every infant wind
That soothed the silver clouds through the deep air.
At length the battle slept. But the Sirocco
Awoke, and drove his flock of thunder-clouds
Over the sea-horizon, blotting out
All objects—save that in the faint moon-glimpse
He saw, or dreamed he saw, the Turkish admiral,
And two the loftiest of our ships of war,
With the bright image of that Queen of Heaven,
Who hid perhaps her face for grief, reversed;
And the abhorrèd cross—

Enter an Attendant.

Attendant. Your Sublime Highness,
The Jew who——
Mahmud. Could not come more seasonably:
Bid him attend.—I'll hear no more. Too long
We gaze on danger through the mist of fear,
And multiply upon our shattered hopes
The images of ruin. Come what will!
To-morrow and to-morrow are as lamps
Set in our path to light us to the edge,
Through rough and smooth; nor can we suffer aught
Which He inflicts not in whose hand we are. [*Exeunt.*

SEMICHORUS I.

Would I were the wingèd cloud
Of a tempest swift and loud!
I would scorn
The smile of morn,
And the wave where the moonrise is born:
I would leave
The Spirits of Eve
A shroud for the corpse of the Day to weave

From other threads than mine.
Bask in the blue noon divine.
Who would? Not I!

SEMICHORUS II.

Whither to fly?

SEMICHORUS I.

Where the rocks that gird the Ægean
Echo to the battle pæan
Of the free,
I would flee
A tempestuous herald of victory!
My golden rain
For the Grecian slain
Should mingle in tears with the bloody main;
And my solemn thunder-knell
Should ring to the world the passing-bell
Of tyranny!

SEMICHORUS II.

Ah king! wilt thou chain
The rack and the rain?
Wilt thou fetter the lightning and hurricane?
The storms are free;
But we!

CHORUS.

O Slavery! thou frost of the world's prime,
Killing its flowers and leaving its thorns bare,
Thy touch has stamped these limbs with crime,
These brows thy branding garland bear;
But the free heart, the impassive soul,
Scorn thy control!

SEMICHORUS I.

"Let there be light!" said Liberty;
And, like sunrise from the sea,
Athens arose!—Around her born,
Shone, like mountains in the morn,
Glorious states;—and are they now
Ashes, wrecks, oblivion?

SEMICHORUS II.

Go
Where Thermæ and Asopus swallowed

Persia, as the sand does foam.
Deluge upon deluge followed,
Discord, Macedon, and Rome:
And lastly thou!

SEMICHORUS I.

Temples and towers,
Citadels and marts, and they
Who live and die there, have been ours,
And may be thine, and must decay.
But Greece and her foundations are
Built below the tide of war,
Based on the crystalline sea
Of thought and its eternity.
Her citizens, imperial spirits,
Rule the present from the past;
On all this world of men inherits
Their seal is set.

SEMICHORUS II.

Hear ye the blast
Whose Orphic thunder thrilling calls
From ruin her Titanian walls—
Whose spirit shakes the sapless bones
Of Slavery? Argos, Corinth, Crete,
Hear, and from their mountain thrones
The dæmons and the nymphs repeat
The harmony.

SEMICHORUS I.

I hear! I hear!

SEMICHORUS II.

The world's eyeless charioteer,
Destiny, is hurrying by!
What faith is crushed, what empire bleeds,
Beneath her earthquake-footed steeds?
What eagle-winged Victory sits
At her right hand? what Shadow flits
Before? what Splendour rolls behind?
Ruin and Renovation cry,
"Who but we?"

SEMICHORUS I.

I hear—I hear—
The hiss as of a rushing wind,

The roar as of an ocean foaming,
The thunder as of earthquake coming!
I hear—I hear—
The crash as of an empire falling,
The shrieks as of a people calling
"Mercy! Mercy!"—how they thrill!
Then a shout of "Kill! kill! kill!"
And then a small still voice, thus—

SEMICHORUS II.

Fear,
Revenge, and Wrong, bring forth their kind:
The foul cubs like their parents are;
Their den is in the guilty mind,
And Conscience feeds them with despair.

SEMICHORUS I.

In sacred Athens, near the fane
Of Wisdom, Pity's altar stood.
Serve not the Unknown God in vain;
But pay *that* broken shrine again
Love for hate, and tears for blood.

Enter MAHMUD *and* AHASUERUS.

Mahmud. Thou art a man, thou sayest, even as we—
Ahasuerus. No more.
Mahmud. But raised above thy fellow-men
By thought, as I by power.
Ahasuerus. Thou sayest so.
Mahmud. Thou art an adept in the difficult lore
Of Greek and Frank philosophy. Thou numberest
The flowers, and thou measurest the stars;
Thou severest element from element;
Thy spirit is present in the past, and sees
The birth of this old world through all its cycles
Of desolation and of loveliness;
And when man was not, and how man became
The monarch and the slave of this low sphere,
And all its narrow circles. It is much.
I honour thee, and would be what thou art
Were I not what I am. But the unborn hour,
Cradled in fear and hope, conflicting storms,
Who shall unveil? Nor thou, nor I, nor any
Mighty or wise. I apprehend not

What thou hast taught me, but I now perceive
That thou art no interpreter of dreams;
Thou dost not own that art, device, or God,
Can make the future present—let it come!
Moreover thou disdainest us and ours.
Thou art as God, whom thou contemplatest.
Ahasuerus. Disdain thee?—not the worm beneath my feet!
The Fathomless has care for meaner things
Than thou canst dream, and has made pride for those
Who would be what they may not, or would seem
That which they are not. Sultan, talk no more
Of thee and me, the future and the past;
But look on that which cannot change—the One,
The unborn and the undying. Earth and ocean,
Space, and the isles of life or light that gem
The sapphire floods of interstellar air,
This firmament pavilioned upon chaos,
With all its cressets of immortal fire,
Whose outwall, bastioned impregnably
Against the escape of boldest thoughts, repels them
As Calpe the Atlantic clouds—this whole
Of suns and worlds and men and beasts and flowers,
With all the silent or tempestuous workings
By which they have been, are, or cease to be,
Is but a vision;—all that it inherits
Are motes of a sick eye, bubbles and dreams.
Thought is its cradle and its grave; nor less
The future and the past are idle shadows
Of thought's eternal flight—they have no being;
Nought is but that which feels itself to be.
Mahmud. What meanest thou? thy words stream like a tempest
Of dazzling mist within my brain—they shake
The earth on which I stand, and hang like night
On heaven above me. What can they avail?
They cast on all things surest, brightest, best,
Doubt, insecurity, astonishment.
Ahasuerus. Mistake me not. All is contained in each.
Dodona's forest to an acorn's cup
Is that which has been or will be to that
Which is—the absent to the present. Thought
Alone, and its quick elements, will, passion,

Reason, imagination, cannot die;
They are what that which they regard appears,
The stuff whence mutability can weave
All that it hath dominion o'er,—worlds, worms,
Empires, and superstitions. What has thought
To do with time or place or circumstance?
Wouldst thou behold the future? Ask and have;
Knock, and it shall be opened:—look, and lo!
The coming age is shadowed on the past,
As on a glass.

Mahmud. Wild, wilder thoughts convulse
My spirit!—Did not Mahomet the Second
Win Stamboul?

Ahasuerus. Thou wouldst ask that giant spirit
The written fortunes of thy house and faith.
Thou wouldst cite one out of the grave to tell
How what was born in blood must die.

Mahmud. Thy words
Have power on me! I see——

Ahasuerus. What hearest thou?

Mahmud. A far whisper——
Terrible silence.

Ahasuerus. What succeeds?

Mahmud. The sound
As of the assault of an imperial city;
The hiss of inextinguishable fire;
The roar of giant cannon; the earthquaking
Fall of vast bastions and precipitous towers;
The shock of crags shot from strange enginry;
The clash of wheels, and clang of armèd hoofs,
And crash of brazen mail, as of the wreck
Of adamantine mountains; the mad blast
Of trumpets, and the neigh of raging steeds;
And shrieks of women whose thrill jars the blood;
And one sweet laugh, most horrible to hear,
As of a joyous infant waked, and playing
With its dead mother's breast:—and now more loud,
The mingled battle-cry—ha! hear I not
"Ἐν τούτῳ νίκη!"—"Allah-illa-Allah?"

Ahasuerus. The sulphurous mist is raised—thou seest—

Mahmud. A chasm,
As of two mountains, in the wall of Stamboul;

And in that ghastly breach the Islamites,
Like giants on the ruins of a world,
Stand in the light of sunrise. In the dust
Glimmers a kingless diadem, and one
Of regal port has cast himself beneath
The stream of war. Another, proudly clad
In golden arms, spurs a Tartarian barb
Into the gap, and with his iron mace
Directs the torrent of that tide of men,—
And seems—he *is*—Mahomet!

Ahasuerus. What thou seest
Is but the ghost of thy forgotten dream;
A dream itself,—yet less, perhaps, than that
Thou call'st reality. Thou mayst behold
How cities on which Empire sleeps enthroned
Bow their towered crests to mutability.
Poised by the flood, e'en on the height thou holdest,
Thou mayst now learn how the full tide of power
Ebbs to its depths.—Inheritor of glory,
Conceived in darkness, born in blood, and nourished
With tears and toil, thou seest the mortal throes
Of that whose birth was but the same. The past
Now stands before thee like an incarnation
Of the to-come. Yet, wouldst thou commune with
That portion of thyself which was ere thou
Didst start for this brief race whose crown is death,—
Dissolve, with that strong faith and fervent passion
Which called it from the uncreated deep,
Yon cloud of war with its tempestuous phantoms
Of raging death; and draw with mighty will
The Imperial Shade hither.

[*Exit* AHASUERUS. THE PHANTOM OF MAHOMET THE SECOND *appears.*

Mahmud. Approach!

Phantom. I come
Thence whither thou must go. The grave is fitter
To take the living than give up the dead;
Yet has thy faith prevailed, and I am here.
The heavy fragments of the power which fell
When I arose, like shapeless crags and clouds,
Hang round my throne on the abyss, and voices
Of strange lament soothe my supreme repose,

Wailing for glory never to return.
A later empire nods in its decay;
The autumn of a greener faith is come;
And wolfish change, like winter, howls to strip
The foliage in which fame, the eagle, built
Her aerie, while dominion whelped below.
The storm is in its branches, and the frost
Is on its leaves, and the blank deep expects
Oblivion on oblivion, spoil on spoil,
Ruin on ruin. Thou art slow, my son.
The anarchs of the world of darkness keep
A throne for thee, round which thine empire lies
Boundless and mute; and, for thy subjects, thou,
Like us, shalt rule the ghosts of murdered life,
The phantoms of the powers who rule thee now—
Mutinous passions, and conflicting fears,
And hopes that sate themselves on dust, and die,
Stripped of their mortal strength, as thou of thine.
Islam must fall; but we will reign together
Over its ruins in the world of death:—
And, if the trunk be dry, yet shall the seed
Unfold itself even in the shape of that
Which gathers birth in its decay. Woe, woe
To the weak people tangled in the grasp
Of its last spasms!

Mahmud. Spirit, woe to all!
Woe to the wronged and the avenger! woe
To the destroyer, woe to the destroyed!
Woe to the dupe, and woe to the deceiver!
Woe to the oppressed, and woe to the oppressor!
Woe both to those that suffer and inflict,—
Those who are born, and those who die! But say,
Imperial shadow of the thing I am,
When, how, by whom, Destruction must accomplish
Her consummation?

Phantom. Ask the cold pale Hour,
Rich in reversion of impending death,
When he shall fall upon whose ripe grey hairs
Sit care and sorrow and infirmity—
The weight which Crime, whose wings are plumed with years,
Leaves in his flight from ravaged heart to heart
Over the heads of men, under which burthen

They bow themselves unto the grave. Fond wretch!
He leans upon his crutch, and talks of years
To come, and how in hours of youth renewed
He will renew lost joys, and——

Voice without. Victory! victory!

[*The Phantom vanishes.*

Mahmud. What sound of the importunate earth has broken
My mighty trance?

Voice without. Victory! victory!

Mahmud. Weak lightning before darkness! poor faint smile
Of dying Islam! voice which art the response
Of hollow weakness!—Do I wake and live?
Were there such things? or may the unquiet brain,
Vexed by the wise mad talk of the old Jew,
Have shaped itself these shadows of its fear?
It matters not!—for nought we see or dream,
Possess, or lose, or grasp at, can be worth
More than it gives or teaches. Come what may,
The future must become the past; and I,
As they were to whom once this present hour,
This gloomy crag of time to which I cling,
Seemed an elysian isle of peace and joy
Never to be attained.—I must rebuke
This drunkenness of triumph ere it die,
And, dying, bring despair.—"Victory!"—Poor slaves!

[*Exit* MAHMUD.

Voice without. Shout in the jubilee of death! The Greeks
Are as a brood of lions in the net,
Round which the kingly hunters of the earth
Stand smiling! Anarchs, ye whose daily food
Are curses, groans, and gold, the fruit of death,
From Thule to the girdle of the world,
Come, feast! The board groans with the flesh of men—
The cup is foaming with a nation's blood—
Famine and Thirst await: eat, drink, and die!

SEMICHORUS I.

Victorious Wrong with vulture scream
Salutes the risen sun, pursues the flying day!
I saw her, ghastly as a tyrant's dream,
Perch on the trembling pyramid of night,
Beneath which earth and all her realms pavilioned lay
In visions of the dawning undelight.

Who shall impede her flight?
Who rob her of her prey?

Voice without. Victory! victory! Russia's famished eagles
Dare not to prey beneath the crescent's light!—
Impale the remnant of the Greeks! despoil!
Violate! make their flesh cheaper than dust!

SEMICHORUS II.

Thou voice which art
The herald of the ill in splendour hid!
Thou echo of the hollow heart
Of Monarchy! bear me to thine abode
When desolation flashes o'er a world destroyed.
Oh bear me to those isles of jagged cloud
Which float like mountains on the earthquakes 'mid
The momentary oceans of the lightning;
Or to some toppling promontory proud
Of solid tempest, whose black pyramid,
Riven, overhangs the founts intensely brightening
Of those dawn-tinted deluges of fire,
Before their waves expire,
When heaven and earth are light, and only light,
In the thunder-night!

Voice without. Victory! victory! Austria, Russia, England,
And that tame serpent, that poor shadow, France,
Cry peace; and that means death when monarchs speak.
Ho there! bring torches, sharpen those red stakes!
These chains are light, fitter for slaves and poisoners
Than Greeks!—Kill! plunder! burn! let none remain!

SEMICHORUS I.

Alas for Liberty,
If numbers, wealth, or unfulfilling years,
Or fate, can quell the free!
Alas for Virtue, when
Torments, or contumely, or the sneers
Of erring-judging men,
Can break the heart where it abides!
Alas! if Love, whose smile makes this obscure world splendid
Can change, with its false times and tides,
Like hope and terror—
Alas for Love!

And Truth, who wanderest lone and unbefriended,
If thou canst veil thy lie-consuming mirror
Before the dazzled eyes of Error,
Alas for thee, image of the Above!

SEMICHORUS II.

Repulse, with plumes from Conquest torn,
Led the Ten-thousand from the limits of the morn
Through many an hostile anarchy:
At length they wept aloud and cried "The sea! the sea!"—
Through exile, persecution, and despair,
Rome was: and young Atlantis shall become
The wonder, or the terror, or the tomb,
Of all whose step wakes Power lulled in her savage lair.
But Greece was as a hermit child
Whose fairest thoughts and limbs were built
To woman's growth by dreams so mild
She knew not pain or guilt.
And now . . . O Victory, blush! and Empire, tremble!
When ye desert the free.
If Greece must be
A wreck, yet shall its fragments re-assemble,
And build themselves again impregnably
In a diviner clime,
To Amphionic music, on some cape sublime
Which frowns above the idle foam of time.

SEMICHORUS I.

Let the tyrants rule the desert they have made;
Let the free possess the paradise they claim;
Be the fortune of our fierce oppressors weighed
With our ruin, our resistance, and our name!

SEMICHORUS II.

Our dead shall be the seed of their decay,
Our survivors be the shadows of their pride;
Our adversity a dream to pass away,
Their dishonour a remembrance to abide.

Voice without. Victory! victory! The bought Briton sends
The keys of ocean to the Islamite.
Now shall the blazon of the cross be veiled,
And British skill directing Othman might
Thunder-strike rebel victory. Oh keep holy
This jubilee of unrevenged blood!
Kill! crush! despoil! Let not a Greek escape!

SEMICHORUS I.

Darkness has dawned in the east
On the noon of time:
The death-birds descend to their feast
From the hungry clime.
Let Freedom and Peace flee far
To a sunnier strand,
And follow Love's folding-star
To the evening land.

SEMICHORUS II.

The young moon has fed
Her exhausted horn
With the sunset's fire;
The weak day is dead,
But the night is not born;
And, like loveliness panting with wild desire
While it trembles with fear and delight,
Hesperus flies from awakening night,
And pants in its beauty and speed with light
Fast-flashing, soft, and bright.
Thou beacon of love! thou lamp of the free!
Guide us far far away
To climes where now, veiled by the ardour of day,
Thou art hidden
From waves on which weary noon
Faints in her summer swoon,
Between kingless continents sinless as Eden,
Around mountains and islands inviolably
Pranked on the sapphire sea.

SEMICHORUS I.

Through the sunset of hope,
Like the shapes of a dream,
What paradise islands of glory gleam!
Beneath heaven's cope,
Their shadows more clear float by—
The sound of their oceans, the light of their sky,
The music and fragrance their solitudes breathe,
Burst like morning on dream, or like heaven on death,
Through the walls of our prison;—
And Greece, which was dead, is arisen!

CHORUS.

The world's great age begins anew,

The golden years return,
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn:
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
From waves serener far;
A new Peneus rolls his fountains
Against the morning star;
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,
Fraught with a later prize;
Another Orpheus sings again,
And loves, and weeps, and dies;
A new Ulysses leaves once more
Calypso for his native shore.

Oh! write no more the tale of Troy,
If earth death's scroll must be—
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy
Which dawns upon the free,
Although a subtler Sphinx renew
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendour of its prime;
And leave, if nought so bright may live,
All earth can take or heaven can give.

Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst, more bright and good
Than all who fell, than one who rose,
Than many unsubdued:
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

Oh cease! must hate and death return?
Cease! must men kill and die?

Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn
Of bitter prophecy!
The world is weary of the past,—
Oh might it die or rest at last!

SHELLEY'S NOTES ON HELLAS.

P. 111.

The quenchless ashes of Milan.

MILAN was the centre of the resistance of the Lombard League against the Austrian tyrant. Frederick Barbarossa burnt the city to the ground; but liberty lived in its ashes, and it rose like an exhalation from its ruin.—See Sismondi's *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes*, a book which has done much towards awakening the Italians to an imitation of their great ancestors.

P. 115.

Chorus.

The popular notions of Christianity are represented in this chorus as true in their relation to the worship they superseded, and that which in all probability they will supersede, without considering their merits in a relation more universal. The first stanza contrasts the immortality of the living and thinking beings which inhabit the planets, and (to use a common and inadequate phrase) clothe themselves in matter, with the transience of the noblest manifestations of the external world. The concluding verses indicate a progressive state of more or less exalted existence, according to the degree of perfection which every distinct intelligence may have attained.

Let it not be supposed that I mean to dogmatize upon a subject concerning which all men are equally ignorant, or that I think the Gordian knot of the origin of evil can be disentangled by that or any similar assertions. The received hypothesis of a Being resembling men in the moral attributes of his nature having called us out of non-existence, who, after inflicting on us the misery of the commission of error, should superadd that of the punishment and the privations consequent upon it, still would remain inexplicable and incredible. That there is a true solution of the riddle, and that in our present state that solution is unattainable by us, are propositions which may be regarded as equally certain; meanwhile, as it is the province of the Poet to attach himself to those ideas which exalt and ennoble humanity, let him be permitted to have conjectured the condition of that futurity towards which we are all impelled by an inextinguishable thirst for immortality. Until better arguments can be produced than sophisms which disgrace the cause, this desire itself must remain the strongest and the only presumption that eternity is the inheritance of every thinking being.

P. 116.

No hoary priests after that Patriarch.

The Greek Patriarch, after having been compelled to fulminate an anathema, against the insurgents, was put to death by the Turks.

Fortunately the Greeks have been taught that they cannot buy security by degradation; and the Turks, though equally cruel, are less cunning than the smooth-faced tyrants of Europe.

As to the anathema, his Holiness might as well have thrown his mitre at Mount Athos, for any effect that it produced. The chiefs of the Greeks are almost all men of comprehension and enlightened views on religion and politics.

P. 124.

The freedman of a western poet-chief.

A Greek who had been Lord Byron's servant commands the insurgents in Attica. This Greek, Lord Byron informs me, though a poet and an enthusiastic patriot, gave him rather the idea of a timid and unenterprizing person. It appears that circumstances make men what they are, and that we all contain the germ of a degree of degradation or greatness whose connexion with our character is determined by events.

P. 125.

The Greeks expect a Saviour from the west.

It is reported that this Messiah had arrived at a sea-port near Lacedæmon in an American brig. The association of names and ideas is irresistibly ludicrous, but the prevalence of such a rumour strongly marks the state of popular enthusiasm in Greece.

P. 131.

The sound
As of the assault of an imperial city.

For the vision of Mahmud of the taking of Constantinople in 1453, see Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. xii., p. 223.

The manner of the invocation of the spirit of Mahomet the Second will be censured as over subtle. I could easily have made the Jew a regular conjuror; and the Phantom an ordinary ghost. I have preferred to represent the Jew as disclaiming all pretension, or even belief in supernatural agency, and as tempting Mahmud to that state of mind in which ideas may be supposed to assume the force of sensations, through the confusion of thought with the objects of thought, and the excess of passion animating the creations of the imagination.

It is a sort of natural magic, susceptible of being exercised in a degree by any one who should have made himself master of the secret associations of another's thoughts.

P. 137.

Chorus.

The final chorus is indistinct and obscure as the event of the living drama whose arrival it foretells.

Prophecies of wars, and rumours of wars, &c., may safely be made by poet or prophet in any age; but to anticipate, however darkly, a period of regeneration and happiness, is a more hazardous exercise of the faculty which bards possess or feign. It will remind the reader, "*magno nec proximus intervallo*," of Isaiah and Virgil: whose ardent spirits, overleaping the actual reign of evil which we endure and bewail, already saw the possible and perhaps approaching state of society in which the "lion shall lie down with the lamb," and "*omnis feret omnia tellus.*" Let these great names be my authority and excuse.

P. 138.

Saturn and Love their long repose.

Saturn and Love were among the deities of a real or imaginary state of innocence and happiness. *All* those *who fell*, or the gods of Greece, Asia, and Egypt; the *one who rose*, or Jesus Christ, at whose appearance the idols of the pagan world were amerced of their worship; and the *many unsubdued*, or the monstrous objects of the idolatry of China, India, the Antarctic islands, and the native tribes of America; certainly have reigned over the understandings of men in conjunction or in succession, during periods in which all we know of evil has been in a state of portentous, and, until the revival of learning and the arts, perpetually increasing, activity. The Grecian gods seem indeed to have been personally more innocent; although it can-

not be said that, as far as temperance and chastity are concerned, they gave so edifying an example as their successor. The sublime human character of Jesus Christ was deformed by an imputed identification with a power who tempted, betrayed, and punished, the innocent beings who were called into existence by his sole will; and, for the period of a thousand years, the spirit of this most just, wise, and benevolent of men has been propitiated with myriads of hecatombs of those who approached the nearest to his innocence and wisdom, sacrificed under every aggravation of atrocity, and variety of torture. The horrors of the Mexican, the Peruvian, and the Indian superstitions are well known.

NOTE ON HELLAS, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

THE South of Europe was in a state of great political excitement at the beginning of the year 1821. The Spanish Revolution had been a signal to Italy—secret societies were formed—and, when Naples rose to declare the Constitution, the call was responded to, from Brundusium to the foot of the Alps. To crush these attempts to obtain liberty, early in 1821, the Austrians poured their armies into the Peninsula: at first their coming rather seemed to add energy and resolution to a people long enslaved. The Piedmontese asserted their freedom; Genoa threw off the yoke of the King of Sardinia; and, as if in playful imitation, the people of the little state of Massa and Carrara gave the *congé* to their sovereign, and set up a republic.

Tuscany alone was perfectly tranquil. It was said that the Austrian minister presented a list of sixty Carbonari to the Grand-Duke, urging their imprisonment; and the Grand-Duke replied, "I do not know whether these sixty men are Carbonari, but I know, if I imprison them, I shall directly have sixty thousand start up." But, though the Tuscans had no desire to disturb the paternal government beneath whose shelter they slumbered, they regarded the progress of the various Italian revolutions with intense interest, and hatred for the Austrian was warm in every bosom. But they had slender hopes; they knew that the Neapolitans would offer no fit resistance to the regular German troops, and that the overthrow of the constitution in Naples would act as a decisive blow against all struggles for liberty in Italy.

We have seen the rise and progress of reform. But the Holy Alliance was alive and active in those days, and few could dream of the peaceful triumph of liberty. It seemed then that the armed assertion of freedom in the South of Europe was the only hope of the liberals, as, if it prevailed, the nations of the north would imitate the example. Happily the reverse has proved the fact. The countries accustomed to the exercise of the privileges of freemen, to a limited extent, have extended, and are extending, these limits. Freedom and knowledge have now a chance of proceeding hand in hand; and, if it continue thus, we may hope for the durability of both. Then, as I have said,—in 1821,—Shelley, as well as every other lover of liberty, looked upon the struggles in Spain and Italy as decisive of the destinies of the world, probably for centuries to come. The interest he took in the progress of affairs was intense. When Genoa declared itself free, his hopes were at their highest. Day after day he read the bulletins of the Austrian army, and sought eagerly to gather tokens of its defeat. He heard of the revolt of Genoa with emotions of transport. His whole heart and soul were in the triumph of the cause. We were living at Pisa at that time; and several well-informed Italians, at the head of whom we may place the celebrated Vaccà, were accustomed to seek for sympathy in their hopes from Shelley: they did not find such for the despair they too generally experienced, founded on contempt for their southern countrymen.

While the fate of the progress of the Austrian armies then invading Naples was yet

in suspense, the news of another revolution filled him with exultation. We had formed the acquaintance at Pisa of several Constantinopolitan Greeks, of the family of Prince Caradja, formerly Hospodar of Wallachia; who, hearing that the bowstring, the accustomed finale of his viceroyalty, was on the road to him, escaped with his treasures, and took up his abode in Tuscany. Among these was the gentleman to whom the drama of *Hellas* is dedicated. Prince Mavrocordato was warmed by those aspirations for the independence of his country which filled the hearts of many of his countrymen. He often intimated the possibility of an insurrection in Greece; but we had no idea of its being so near at hand, when, on the 1st of April 1821, he called on Shelley, bringing the proclamation of his cousin, Prince Ypsilanti, and, radiant with exultation and delight, declared that henceforth Greece would be free.

Shelley had hymned the dawn of liberty in Spain and Naples, in two odes dictated by the warmest enthusiasm; he felt himself naturally impelled to decorate with poetry the uprise of the descendants of that people whose works he regarded with deep admiration, and to adopt the vaticinatory character in prophesying their success. *Hellas* was written in a moment of enthusiasm. It is curious to remark how well he overcomes the difficulty of forming a drama out of such scant materials. His prophecies, indeed, came true in their general, not their particular, purport. He did not foresee the death of Lord Londonderry, which was to be the epoch of a change in English politics, particularly as regarded foreign affairs; nor that the navy of his country would fight for instead of against the Greeks, and by the battle of Navarino secure their enfranchisement from the Turks. Almost against reason, as it appeared to him, he resolved to believe that Greece would prove triumphant; and in this spirit, auguring ultimate good, yet grieving over the vicissitudes to be endured in the interval, he composed his drama.

Hellas was among the last of his compositions, and is among the most beautiful. The choruses are singularly imaginative, and melodious in their versification. There are some stanzas that beautifully exemplify Shelley's peculiar style; as, for instance, the assertion of the intellectual empire which must be for ever the inheritance of the country of Homer, Sophocles, and Plato:

> But Greece and her foundations are
> Built below the tide of war;
> Based on the crystalline sea
> Of thought and its eternity.

And again, that philosophical truth felicitously imaged forth—

> Revenge and Wrong bring forth their kind:
> The foul cubs like their parents are;
> Their den is in the guilty mind,
> And Conscience feeds them with despair.

The conclusion of the last chorus is among the most beautiful of his lyrics. The imagery is distinct and majestic; the prophecy, such as poets love to dwell upon, the Regeneration of Mankind—and that regeneration reflecting back splendour on the foregone time, from which it inherits so much of intellectual wealth, and memory of past virtuous deeds, as must render the possession of happiness and peace of tenfold value.

EARLY POEMS.

TO COLERIDGE.

ΔΑΚΡΥΕΙ ΔΙΟΙΣΩ ΠΟΤΜΟΝ 'ΑΠΟΤΜΟΝ.

I.

OH! there are spirits in the air,
And genii of the evening breeze,
And gentle ghosts with eyes as fair
As starbeams among twilight trees:—
Such lovely ministers to meet
Oft hast thou turned from men thy lonely feet.

II.

With mountain winds, and babbling springs,
And moonlight seas, that are the voice
Of these inexplicable things,
Thou didst hold commune, and rejoice
When they did answer thee. But they
Cast like a worthless boon thy love away.

III.

And thou hast sought in starry eyes
Beams that were never meant for thine,
Another's wealth;—tame sacrifice
To a fond faith! Still dost thou pine?
Still dost thou hope that greeting hands,
Voice, looks, or lips, may answer thy demands?

IV.

Ah! wherefore didst thou build thine hope
On the false earth's inconstancy?
Did thine own mind afford no scope
Of love or moving thoughts to thee—
That natural scenes or human smiles
Could steal the power to wind thee in their wiles?

V.

Yes, all the faithless smiles are fled
Whose falsehood left thee broken-hearted;
The glory of the moon is dead;
Night's ghosts and dreams have now departed:
Thine own soul still is true to thee,
But changed to a foul fiend through misery.

VI.

This fiend, whose ghastly presence ever
Beside thee like thy shadow hangs,
Dream not to chase;—the mad endeavour
Would scourge thee to severer pangs.
Be as thou art. Thy settled fate,
Dark as it is, all change would aggravate.

STANZAS—APRIL 1814.

AWAY! the moor is dark beneath the moon,
Rapid clouds have drunk the last pale beam of even:
Away! the gathering winds will call the darkness soon,
And profoundest midnight shroud the serene lights of heaven.
Pause not! the time is past! Every voice cries "Away!"
Tempt not with one last glance thy friend's ungentle mood:
Thy lover's eye, so glazed and cold, dares not entreat thy stay:
Duty and dereliction guide thee back to solitude.

Away, away! to thy sad and silent home;
Pour bitter tears on its desolated hearth;
Watch the dim shades as like ghosts they go and come,
And complicate strange webs of melancholy mirth.
The leaves of wasted autumn woods shall float around thine head,
The blooms of dewy Spring shall gleam beneath thy feet:
But thy soul or this world must fade in the frost that binds the dead,
Ere midnight's frown and morning's smile, ere thou and peace, may meet.

The cloud shadows of midnight possess their own repose,
For the weary winds are silent, or the moon is in the deep;
Some respite to its turbulence unresting ocean knows;
Whatever moves or [redacted] or grieves hath its appointed sleep.

Thou in the grave shalt rest:—yet, till the phantoms flee
Which that house and heath and garden made dear to thee erewhile,
Thy remembrance and repentance and deep musings are not free
From the music of two voices, and the light of one sweet smile.

MUTABILITY.

I.

We are as clouds that veil the midnight moon;
How restlessly they speed and gleam and quiver,
Streaking the darkness radiantly! yet soon
Night closes round, and they are lost for ever:—

II.

Or like forgotten lyres whose dissonant strings
Give various response to each varying blast,
To whose frail frame no second motion brings
One mood or modulation like the last.

III.

We rest—a dream has power to poison sleep;
We rise—one wandering thought pollutes the day;
We feel, conceive, or reason, laugh or weep,
Embrace fond woe, or cast our cares away:—

IV.

It is the same!—For, be it joy or sorrow,
The path of its departure still is free;
Man's yesterday may ne'er be like his morrow;
Nought may endure but Mutability.

ON DEATH.

There is no work nor device nor knowledge nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.—ECCLESIASTES.

I.

THE pale, the cold, and the moony smile
Which the meteor beam of a starless night
Sheds on a lonely and sea-girt isle
Ere the dawning of morn's undoubted light
Is the flame of life so fickle and wan
That flits round our steps till their strength is gone

II.

O man! hold thee on in courage of soul
Through the stormy shades of thy worldly way;
And the billows of cloud that around thee roll
Shall sleep in the light of a wondrous day,
Where hell and heaven shall leave thee free
To the universe of destiny.

III.

This world is the nurse of all we know,
This world is the mother of all we feel;
And the coming of death is a fearful blow
To a brain unencompassed with nerves of steel,
When all that we know or feel or see
Shall pass like an unreal mystery.

IV.

The secret things of the grave are there
Where all but this frame must surely be,
Though the fine-wrought eye and the wondrous ear
No longer will live to hear or to see
All that is great and all that is strange
In the boundless realm of unending change.

V.

Who telleth a tale of unspeaking death?
Who lifteth the veil of what is to come?
Who painteth the shadows that are beneath
The wide-winding caves of the peopled tomb?
Or uniteth the hopes of what shall be
With the fears and the love for that which we see?

A SUMMER-EVENING CHURCHYARD, LECHLADE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

I.

The wind has swept from the wide atmosphere
Each vapour that obscured the sunset's ray,
And pallid Evening twines its beaming hair
In duskier braids around the languid eyes of Day:
Silence and Twilight, unbeloved of men,
Creep hand in hand from yon obscurest glen.

II.

They breathe their spells towards the departing day,
Encompassing the earth, air, stars, and sea;
Light, sound, and motion, own their power, and they

Responding to the charm with its own mystery.
The winds are still, or the dry church-tower grass
Knows not their gentle motions as they pass.

III.

Thou too, aërial pile, whose pinnacles
Point from one shrine like pyramids of fire,
Obey'st in silence their sweet solemn spells,
Clothing in hues of heaven thy dim and distant spire,
Around whose lessening and invisible height
Gather among the stars the clouds of night.

IV.

The dead are sleeping in their sepulchres:
And, mouldering as they sleep, a thrilling sound,
Half sense half thought, among the darkness stirs,
Breathed from their wormy beds all living things around;
And, mingling with the still night and mute sky,
Its awful hush is felt inaudibly.

V.

Thus solemnized and softened, death is mild
And terrorless as this serenest night.
Here could I hope, like some enquiring child
Sporting on graves, that death did hide from human sight
Sweet secrets, or beside its breathless sleep
That loveliest dreams perpetual watch did keep.

1815.

TO WORDSWORTH.

POET of Nature, thou hast wept to know
That things depart which never may return;
Childhood and youth, friendship, and love's first glow,
Have fled like sweet dreams, leaving thee to mourn.
These common woes I feel. One loss is mine,
Which thou too feel'st, yet I alone deplore.
Thou wert as a lone star whose light did shine
On some frail bark in winter's midnight roar:
Thou hast like to a rock-built refuge stood
Above the blind and battling multitude:
In honoured poverty thy voice did weave
Songs consecrate to truth and liberty.
Deserting these, thou leavest me to grieve,
Thus, having been, that thou shouldst cease to be.

FEELINGS OF A REPUBLICAN ON THE FALL OF BONAPARTE.

I HATED thee, fallen Tyrant! I did groan
To think that a most unambitious slave,
Like thou, should dance and revel on the grave
Of Liberty. Thou mightst have built thy throne
Where it had stood even now: thou didst prefer
A frail and bloody pomp, which Time has swept
In fragments towards oblivion. Massacre,
For this, I prayed, would on thy sleep have crept,
Treason and Slavery, Rapine, Fear, and Lust,
And stifled thee their minister. I know
Too late, since thou and France are in the dust,
That Virtue owns a more eternal foe
Than Force or Fraud: old Custom, Legal Crime,
And bloody Faith, the foulest birth of Time.

LINES.

I.

THE cold earth slept below;
Above, the cold sky shone;
And all around,
With a chilling sound,
From caves of ice and fields of snow
The breath of night like death did flow
Beneath the sinking moon.

II.

The wintry hedge was black;
The green grass was not seen;
The birds did rest
On the bare thorn's breast,
Whose roots, beside the pathway track,
Had bound their folds o'er many a crack
Which the frost had made between.

III.

Thine eyes glowed in the glare
Of the moon's dying light.
As a fen-fire's beam
On a sluggish stream

Gleams dimly, so the moon shone there;
And it yellowed the strings of thy tangled hair,
That shook in the wind of night.

IV.

The moon made thy lips pale, beloved;
The wind made thy bosom chill;
The night did shed
On thy dear head
Its frozen dew, and thou didst lie
Where the bitter breath of the naked sky
Might visit thee at will.

November 1815.

NOTES ON THE EARLY POEMS, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

THE remainder of Shelley's Poems will be arranged in the order in which they were written. Of course, mistakes will occur in placing some of the shorter ones; for, as I have said, many of these were thrown aside, and I never saw them till I had the misery of looking over his writings after the hand that traced them was dust; and some were in the hands of others, and I never saw them till now. The subjects of the poems are often to me an unerring guide; but on other occasions I can only guess, by finding them in the pages of the same manuscript book that contains poems with the date of whose composition I am fully conversant. In the present arrangement all his poetical translations will be placed together at the end.

The loss of his early papers prevents my being able to give any of the poetry of his boyhood. Of the few I give as Early Poems, the greater part were published with *Alastor;* some of them were written previously, some at the same period. The poem beginning "Oh! there are spirits in the air" was addressed in idea to Coleridge, whom he never knew; and at whose character he could only guess imperfectly, through his writings, and accounts he heard of him from some who knew him well. He regarded his change of opinions as rather an act of will than conviction, and believed that in his inner heart he would be haunted by what Shelley considered the better and holier aspirations of his youth. The summer evening that suggested to him the poem written in the churchyard of Lechlade occurred during his voyage up the Thames in 1815. He had been advised by a physician to live as much as possible in the open air; and a fortnight of a bright warm July was spent in tracing the Thames to its source. He never spent a season more tranquilly than the summer of 1815. He had just recovered from a severe pulmonary attack; the weather was warm and pleasant. He lived near Windsor Forest; and his life was spent under its shades or on the water, meditating subjects for verse. Hitherto, he had chiefly aimed at extending his political doctrines, and attempted so to do by appeals in prose essays to the people, exhorting them to claim their rights; but he had now begun to feel that the time for action was not ripe in England, and that the pen was the only instrument wherewith to prepare the way for better things.

In the scanty journals kept during those years I find a record of the books that Shelley read during several years. During the years of 1814 and 1815, the list is extensive. It includes, in Greek, Homer, Hesiod, Theocritus, the histories of Thucy-

dides and Herodotus, and Diogenes Laertius. In Latin, Petronius, Suetonius, some of the works of Cicero, a large proportion of those of Seneca and Livy. In English, Milton's Poems, Wordsworth's *Excursion*, Southey's *Madoc* and *Thalaba*, Locke *on the Human Understanding*, Bacon's *Novum Organum*. In Italian, Ariosto, Tasso, and Alfieri. In French, the *Rêveries d'un Solitaire* of Rousseau. To these may be added several modern books of travels. He read few novels.

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1816.

THE SUNSET.

THERE late was one within whose subtle being,
As light and wind within some delicate cloud
That fades amid the blue noon's burning sky,
Genius and death contended. None may know
The sweetness of the joy which made his breath
Fail like the trances of the summer air,
When, with the lady of his love, who then
First knew the unreserve of mingled being,
He walked along the pathway of a field,
Which to the east a hoar wood shadowed o'er,
But to the west was open to the sky.
There now the sun had sunk; but lines of gold
Hung on the ashen clouds, and on the points
Of the far level grass and nodding flowers,
And the old dandelion's hoary beard,
And, mingled with the shades of twilight, lay
On the brown massy woods—and in the east
The broad and burning moon lingeringly rose
Between the black trunks of the crowded trees,
While the faint stars were gathering overhead.—
"Is it not strange, Isabel," said the youth,
"I never saw the sun? We will walk here
To-morrow; thou shalt look on it with me."

That night the youth and lady mingled lay
In love and sleep—but when the morning came
The lady found her lover dead and cold.
Let none believe that God in mercy gave
That stroke. The lady died not nor grew wild,

But year by year lived on :—in truth I think
Her gentleness and patience and sad smiles,
And that she did not die but lived to tend
Her aged father, were a kind of madness,
If madness 'tis to be unlike the world.
For but to see her were to read the tale
Woven by some subtlest bard, to make hard hearts
Dissolve away in wisdom-working grief ;—
Her eyelashes were torn away with tears,
Her lips and cheeks were like things dead—so pale ;
Her hands were thin, and through their wandering veins
And weak articulations might be seen
Day's ruddy light. The tomb of thy dead self
Which one vexed ghost inhabits, night and day,
Is all, lost child, that now remains of thee !

"Inheritor of more than earth can give,
Passionless calm and silence unreproved,—
Whether the dead find—oh ! not sleep—but rest,
And are the uncomplaining things they seem,
Or live, or drop in the deep sea of Love ;
Oh ! that, like thine, mine epitaph were—Peace !"
This was the only moan she ever made.

Bishopgate, Spring 1816.

HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY.

I.

THE awful shadow of some unseen Power
Floats, though unseen, among us ; visiting
This various world with as inconstant wing
As summer winds that creep from flower to flower.
Like moonbeams that behind some piny mountain shower,
It visits with inconstant glance
Each human heart and countenance ;
Like hues and harmonies of evening,
Like clouds in starlight widely spread,
Like memory of music fled,
Like aught that for its grace may be
Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

II.

Spirit of BEAUTY, that dost consecrate
With thine own hues all thou dost shine upon
Of human thought or form, where art thou gone?
Why dost thou pass away, and leave our state,
This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate?—
Ask why the sunlight not for ever
Weaves rainbows o'er yon mountain river;
Why aught should fail and fade that once is shown;
Why fear and dream and death and birth
Cast on the daylight of this earth
Such gloom; why man has such a scope
For love and hate, despondency and hope!

III.

No voice from some sublimer world hath ever
To sage or poet these responses given:
Therefore the names of Demon, Ghost, and Heaven,
Remain the records of their vain endeavour;
Frail spells, whose uttered charm might not avail to sever,
From all we hear and all we see,
Doubt, chance, and mutability.
Thy light alone, like mist o'er mountains driven,
Or music by the night-wind sent
Through strings of some still instrument,
Or moonlight on a midnight stream,
Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream.

IV.

Love, hope, and self-esteem, like clouds depart
And come, for some uncertain moments lent.
Man were immortal and omnipotent,
Didst thou, unknown and awful as thou art,
Keep with thy glorious train firm state within his heart.
Thou messenger of sympathies
That wax and wane in lovers' eyes!
Thou that to human thought art nourishment,
Like darkness to a dying flame!
Depart not as thy shadow came:
Depart not, lest the grave should be,
Like life and fear, a dark reality!

V.

While yet a boy, I sought for ghosts, and sped
Through many a listening chamber, cave, and ruin,
And starlight wood, with fearful steps pursuing
Hopes of high talk with the departed dead.
I called on poisonous names with which our youth is fed.
I was not heard, I saw them not;
When, musing deeply on the lot
Of life, at that sweet time when winds are wooing
All vital things that wake to bring
News of birds and blossoming,
Sudden thy shadow fell on me:—
I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ecstasy!

VI.

I vowed that I would dedicate my powers
To thee and thine: have I not kept the vow?
With beating heart and streaming eyes, even now
I call the phantoms of a thousand hours
Each from his voiceless grave. They have in visioned bowers
Of studious zeal or love's delight
Outwatched with me the envious night:
They know that never joy illumed my brow,
Unlinked with hope that thou wouldst free
This world from its dark slavery;
That thou, O awful Loveliness,
Wouldst give whate'er these words cannot express.

VII.

The day becomes more solemn and serene
When noon is past: there is a harmony
In autumn, and a lustre in its sky,
Which through the summer is not heard nor seen,
As if it could not be, as if it had not been.
Thus let thy power, which like the truth
Of Nature on my passive youth
Descended, to my onward life supply
Its calm,—to one who worships thee,
And every form containing thee,
Whom, Spirit fair, thy spells did bind
To fear himself, and love all humankind.

MONT BLANC.

LINES WRITTEN IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.

I.

THE everlasting universe of Things
Flows through the Mind, and rolls its rapid waves,
Now dark—now glittering—now reflecting gloom—
Now lending splendour, where from secret springs
The source of human thought its tribute brings
Of waters,—with a sound but half its own,
Such as a feeble brook will oft assume
In the wild woods, among the mountains lone,
Where waterfalls around it leap for ever,
Where woods and winds contend, and a vast river
Over its rocks ceaselessly bursts and raves.

II.

Thus thou, Ravine of Arve—dark, deep Ravine—
Thou many-coloured many-voicèd vale,
Over whose pines and crags and caverns sail
Fast cloud-shadows and sunbeams; awful scene,
Where Power in likeness of the Arve comes down
From the ice-gulfs that gird his secret throne,
Bursting through these dark mountains like the flame
Of lightning through the tempest;—thou dost lie,—
Thy giant brood of pines around thee clinging,
Children of elder time, in whose devotion
The chainless winds still come and ever came
To drink their odours, and their mighty swinging
To hear, an old and solemn harmony;
Thine earthly rainbows stretched across the sweep
Of the etherial waterfall, whose veil
Robes some unsculptured image; the strange sleep
Which when the voices of the desert fail,
Wraps all in its own deep eternity;
Thy caverns echoing to the Arve's commotion,
A loud lone sound no other sound can tame.
Thou art pervaded with that ceaseless motion,
Thou art the path of that unresting sound,
Dizzy Ravine! And, when I gaze on thee,
I seem, as in a trance sublime and strange,

To muse on my own separate fantasy,
My own, my human mind, which passively
Now renders and receives fast influencings,
Holding an unremitting interchange
With the clear universe of things around;
One legion of wild thoughts, whose wandering wings
Now float above thy darkness, and now rest
Where that or thou art no unbidden guest,
In the still cave of the witch Poesy,—
Seeking—among the shadows that pass by,
Ghosts of all things that are—some shade of thee,
Some phantom, some faint image. Till the breast
From which they fled recalls them, thou art there!

III.

Some say that gleams of a remoter world
Visit the soul in sleep,—that death is slumber,
And that its shapes the busy thoughts outnumber
Of those who wake and live. I look on high;
Has some unknown omnipotence unfurled
The veil of life and death? Or do I lie
In dream, and does the mightier world of sleep
Spread far around and inaccessibly
Its circles? for the very spirit fails,
Driven like a homeless cloud from steep to steep
That vanishes among the viewless gales!
Far, far above, piercing the infinite sky,
Mont Blanc appears—still, snowy, and serene.
Its subject mountains their unearthly forms
Pile around it, ice and rock; broad vales between
Of frozen floods, unfathomable deeps,
Blue as the overhanging heaven, that spread
And wind among the accumulated steeps;
A desert peopled by the storms alone,
Save when the eagle brings some hunter's bone,
And the wolf tracks her there. How hideously
Its shapes are heaped around—rude, bare, and high,
Ghastly and scarred and riven!—Is this the scene
Where the old Earthquake-dæmon taught her young
Ruin? were these their toys? or did a sea
Of fire envelop once this silent snow?
None can reply—all seems eternal now.

The wilderness has a mysterious tongue
Which teaches awful doubt,—or faith so mild,
So solemn, so serene, that Man may be,
But for such faith, with Nature reconciled.
Thou hast a voice, great Mountain, to repeal
Large codes of fraud and woe; not understood
By all, but which the wise and great and good
Interpret, or make felt, or deeply feel.

IV.

The fields, the lakes, the forests, and the streams,
Ocean, and all the living things that dwell
Within the dædal earth, lightning and rain,
Earthquake and fiery flood and hurricane,
The torpor of the year when feeble dreams
Visit the hidden buds, or dreamless sleep
Holds every future leaf and flower, the bound
With which from that detested trance they leap,
The works and ways of man, their death and birth,
And that of him, and all that his may be,
All things that move and breathe, with toil and sound
Are born and die, revolve, subside, and swell.
Power dwells apart in its tranquillity,
Remote, serene, and inaccessible:
And *this* the naked countenance of earth
On which I gaze, even these primæval mountains,
Teach the adverting mind. The glaciers creep,
Like snakes that watch their prey, from their far fountains,
Slow rolling on; there, many a precipice
Frost and the sun in scorn of mortal power
Have piled—dome, pyramid, and pinnacle,
A city of death, distinct with many a tower
And wall impregnable of beaming ice.
Yet not a city, but a flood of ruin,
Is there, that from the boundary of the skies
Rolls its perpetual stream; vast pines are strewing
Its destined path, or in the mangled soil
Branchless and shattered stand; the rocks, drawn down
From yon remotest waste, have overthrown
The limits of the dead and living world,
Never to be reclaimed. The dwelling-place
Of insects, beasts, and birds, becomes its spoil;

Their food and their retreat for ever gone,
So much of life and joy is lost. The race
Of man flies far in dread; his work and dwelling
Vanish like smoke before the tempest's stream,
And their place is not known. Below, vast caves
Shine in the rushing torrents' restless gleam,
Which, from those secret chasms in tumult welling,
Meet in the Vale; and one majestic River,
The breath and blood of distant lands, for ever
Rolls its loud waters to the ocean waves,
Breathes its swift vapours to the circling air.

V.

Mont Blanc yet gleams on high: the power is there,
The still and solemn power, of many sights
And many sounds, and much of life and death.
In the calm darkness of the moonless nights,
In the lone glare of day, the snows descend
Upon that Mountain; none beholds them there,
Nor when the flakes burn in the sinking sun,
Or the star-beams dart through them. Winds contend
Silently there, and heap the snow, with breath
Rapid and strong, but silently. Its home
The voiceless lightning in these solitudes
Keeps innocently, and like vapour broods
Over the snow. The secret Strength of Things,
Which governs thought, and to the infinite dome
Of heaven is as a law, inhabits thee.
And what were thou and earth and stars and sea,
If to the human mind's imaginings
Silence and solitude were vacancy?

23 *June* 1816.

NOTE ON POEMS OF 1816, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

SHELLEY wrote little during this year. The poem entitled *The Sunset* was written in the Spring of the year, while still residing at Bishopgate. He spent the summer on the shores of the Lake of Geneva. *The Hymn to Intellectual Beauty* was conceived during his voyage round the lake with Lord Byron. He occupied himself during this voyage by reading the *Nouvelle Héloïse* for the first time. The reading it on the very spot where the scenes are laid added to the

interest; and he was at once surprised and charmed by the passionate eloquence and earnest enthralling interest that pervade this work. There was something in the character of Saint-Preux, in his abnegation of self, and in the worship he paid to Love, that coincided with Shelley's own disposition; and, though differing in many of the views, and shocked by others, yet the effect of the whole was fascinating and delightful.

Mont Blanc was inspired by a view of that mountain and its surrounding peaks and valleys, as he lingered on the Bridge of Arve on his way through the Valley of Chamouni. Shelley makes the following mention of this poem in his publication of the *History of Six Weeks' Tour, and Letters from Switzerland*:—"The Poem entitled *Mont Blanc* is written by the author of the two letters from Chamouni and Vevai. It was composed under the immediate impression of the deep and powerful feelings excited by the objects which it attempts to describe; and, as an undisciplined overflowing of the soul, rests its claim to approbation on an attempt to imitate the untameable wildness and inaccessible solemnity from which those feelings sprang."

This was an eventful year, and less time was given to study than usual. In the list of his reading I find, in Greek, Theocritus, the *Prometheus* of Æschylus, several of Plutarch's Lives, and the works of Lucian. In Latin, Lucretius, Pliny's Letters, the *Annals* and *Germany* of Tacitus. In French, the *History of the French Revolution* by Lacretelle. He read for the first time, this year, Montaigne's Essays, and regarded them ever after as one of the most delightful and instructive books in the world. The list is scanty in English works: Locke's Essay, *Political Justice*, and Coleridge's *Lay Sermon*, form nearly the whole. It was his frequent habit to read aloud to me in the evening; in this way we read, this year, the New Testament, *Paradise Lost*, Spenser's *Faery Queen*, and *Don Quixote*.

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1817.

MARIANNE'S DREAM.

I.

A PALE Dream came to a Lady fair,
And said, "A boon, a boon, I pray!
I know the secrets of the air;
And things are lost in the glare of day,
Which I can make the sleeping see
If they will put their trust in me.

II.

"And thou shalt know of things unknown,
If thou wilt let me rest between
The veiny lids whose fringe is thrown
Over thine eyes so dark and sheen."
And half in hope and half in fright
The Lady closed her eyes so bright.

III.

At first all deadly shapes were driven
  Tumultuously across her sleep,
And o'er the vast cope of bending heaven
  All ghastly-visaged clouds did sweep;
And the Lady ever looked to spy
If the golden sun shone forth on high.

IV.

And, as towards the east she turned,
  She saw, aloft in the morning air
Which now with hues of sunrise burned,
  A great black anchor rising there;
And wherever the Lady turned her eyes
It hung before her in the skies.

V.

The sky was blue as the summer sea;
  The depths were cloudless overhead;
The air was calm as it could be;
  There was no sight or sound of dread,
But that black anchor floating still
Over the piny eastern hill.

VI.

The Lady grew sick with a weight of fear
  To see that anchor ever hanging,
And veiled her eyes. She then did hear
  The sound as of a dim low clanging;
And looked abroad if she might know
Was it aught else, or but the flow
Of the blood in her own veins to and fro.

VII.

There was a mist in the sunless air,
  Which shook as it were with an earthquake shock;
But the very weeds that blossomed there
  Were moveless, and each mighty rock
Stood on its basis steadfastly;
The anchor was seen no more on high.

VIII.

But piled around, with summits hid
  In lines of cloud at intervals,

Stood many a mountain pyramid,
Among whose everlasting walls
Two mighty cities shone, and ever
Through the red mist their domes did quiver.

IX.

On two dread mountains, from whose crest
Might seem the eagle for her brood
Would ne'er have hung her dizzy nest,
Those tower-encircled cities stood.
A vision strange such towers to see,
Sculptured and wrought so gorgeously,
Where human art could never be.

X.

And columns framed of marble white,
And giant fanes, dome over dome
Piled, and triumphant gates, all bright
With workmanship which could not come
From touch of mortal instrument,
Shot o'er the vales, or lustre lent
From their own shapes magnificent.

XI.

But still the Lady heard that clang
Filling the wide air far away,
And still the mist whose light did hang
Among the mountains shook alway;
So that the Lady's heart beat fast,
As half in joy and half aghast
On those high domes her look she cast.

XII.

Sudden from out that city sprung
A light that made the earth grow red;
Two flames that each with quivering tongue
Licked its high domes, and overhead
Among those mighty towers and fanes
Dropped fire, as a volcano rains
Its sulphurous ruin on the plains.

XIII.

And hark! a rush, as if the deep
Had burst its bonds! She looked behind,

And saw over the western steep
A raging flood descend, and wind
Through that wide vale. She felt no fear,
But said within herself, "'Tis clear
These towers are Nature's own, and she
To save them has sent forth the sea."

XIV.

And now those raging billows came
Where that fair Lady sate; and she
Was borne towards the showering flame
By the wild waves heaped tumultuously,
And, on a little plank, the flow
Of the whirpool bore her to and fro.

XV.

The flames were fiercely vomited
From every tower and every dome,
And dreary light did widely shed
O'er that vast flood's suspended foam,
Beneath the smoke which hung its night
On the stained cope of heaven's light.

XVI.

The plank whereon that Lady sate
Was driven through the chasms, about and about,
Between the peaks so desolate
Of the drowning mountains, in and out,
As the thistle-beard on a whirlwind sails—
While the flood was filling those hollow vales.

XVII.

At last her plank an eddy crossed,
And bore her to the city's wall,
Which now the flood had reached almost;
It might the stoutest heart appall
To hear the fire roar and hiss
Through the domes of those mighty palaces.

XVIII.

The eddy whirled her round and round
Before a gorgeous gate which stood
Piercing the cloud of smoke which bound
Its aery arch with light like blood.

She looked on that gate of marble clear
With wonder that extinguished fear:—

XIX.

For it was filled with sculptures rarest
Of forms most beautiful and strange,
Like nothing human, but the fairest
Of wingèd shapes whose legions range
Throughout the sleep of those that are,
Like this same Lady, good and fair.

XX.

And, as she looked, still lovelier grew
Those marble forms; the sculptor sure
Was a strong spirit, and the hue
Of his own mind did there endure
After the touch whose power had braided
Such grace was in some sad change faded.

XXI.

She looked. The flames were dim, the flood
Grew tranquil as a woodland river
Winding through hills in solitude;
Those marble shapes then seemed to quiver,
And their fair limbs to float in motion
Like weeds unfolding in the ocean.

XXII.

And their lips moved,—one seemed to speak,—
When suddenly the mountain cracked,
And through the chasm the flood did break
With an earth-uplifting cataract.
The statues gave a joyous scream,—
And on its wings the pale thin Dream
Lifted the Lady from the stream.

XXIII.

The dizzy flight of that phantom palè
Waked the fair Lady from her sleep;
And she arose, while from the veil
Of her dark eyes the Dream did creep.
And she walked about as one who knew
That sleep has sights as clear and true
As any waking eyes can view.

Marlow.

DEATH.

THEY die—the dead return not. Misery
Sits near an open grave, and calls them over,
A youth with hoary hair and haggard eye.
They are the names of kindred, friend, and lover,
Which he so feebly calls. They all are gone,
Fond wretch, all dead! Those vacant names alone,
This most familiar scene, my pain,
These tombs,—alone remain.

Misery, my sweetest friend, oh! weep no more!
Thou wilt not be consoled? I wonder not:
For I have seen thee from thy dwelling's door
Watch the calm sunset with them, and this spot
Was even as bright and calm but transitory,—
And now thy hopes are gone, thy hair is hoary.
This most familiar scene, my pain,
These tombs,—alone remain.

TO CONSTANTIA, SINGING.

I.

THUS to be lost and thus to sink and die
Perchance were death indeed!—Constantia, turn!
In thy dark eyes a power like light doth lie,
Even though the sounds which were thy voice, which burn
Between thy lips, are laid to sleep;
Within thy breath, and on thy hair, like odour, it is yet,
And from thy touch like fire doth leap.
Even while I write, my burning cheeks are wet;
Alas that the torn heart can bleed but not forget!

II.

A breathless awe, like the swift change
Unseen but felt in youthful slumbers,
Wild, sweet, but uncommunicably strange,
Thou breathest now in fast-ascending numbers.

The cope of heaven seems rent and cloven
By the enchantment of thy strain,
And on my shoulders wings are woven,
To follow its sublime career
Beyond the mighty moons that wane
Upon the verge of Nature's utmost sphere,
Till the world's shadowy walls are past and disappear.

III.

Her voice is hovering o'er my soul—it lingers
O'ershadowing it with soft and lulling wings;
The blood and life within those snowy fingers
Teach witchcraft to the instrumental strings.
My brain is wild, my breath comes quick—
The blood is listening in my frame,
And thronging shadows, fast and thick,
Fall on my overflowing eyes;
My heart is quivering like a flame;
As morning dew that in the sunbeam dies,
I am dissolved in these consuming ecstasies.

IV.

I have no life, Constantia, now, but thee,
Whilst, like the world-surrounding air, thy song
Flows on, and fills all things with melody.
Now is thy voice a tempest swift and strong,
On which, like one in trance upborne,
Secure o'er rocks and waves I sweep,
Rejoicing like a cloud of morn:
Now 'tis the breath of summer night,
Which, when the starry waters sleep,
Round western isles with incense-blossoms bright
Lingering, suspends my soul in its voluptuous flight.

SONNET.—OZYMANDIAS.

I MET a traveller from an antique land
Who said: "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command

Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
  Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed.
And on the pedestal these words appear:
  'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair!'
  Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
  The lone and level sands stretch far away."

TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

I.

THY country's curse is on thee, darkest crest
  Of that foul, knotted, many-headed worm
Which rends our Mother's bosom—priestly pest!
  Masked resurrection of a buried form!

II.

Thy country's curse is on thee! Justice sold,
  Truth trampled, Nature's landmarks overthrown,
And heaps of fraud-accumulated gold,
  Plead, loud as thunder, at Destruction's throne.

III.

And, whilst that slow sure Angel which aye stands
  Watching the beck of Mutability
Delays to execute her high commands,
  And, though a nation weeps, spares thine and thee;

IV.

Oh let a father's curse be on thy soul,
  And let a daughter's hope be on thy tomb,
And both on thy grey head a leaden cowl
  To weigh thee down to thine approaching doom!

V.

I curse thee by a parent's outraged love;
  By hopes long cherished and too lately lost;
By gentle feelings thou couldst never prove;
  By griefs which thy stern nature never crossed;

VI.

By those infantine smiles of happy light
Which were a fire within a stranger's hearth,
Quenched even when kindled, in untimely night
Hiding the promise of a lovely birth;

VII.

By those unpractised accents of young speech,
Which he who is a father thought to frame
To gentlest lore such as the wisest teach.
Thou strike the lyre of mind! Oh grief and shame!

VIII.

By all the happy see in children's growth,
That undeveloped flower of budding years,
Sweetness and sadness interwoven both,
Source of the sweetest hopes and saddest fears:

IX.

By all the days, under a hireling's care,
Of dull constraint and bitter heaviness,—
Oh wretched ye if ever any were,
Sadder than orphans yet not fatherless!—

X.

By the false cant which on their innocent lips
Must hang like poison on an opening bloom;
By the dark creeds which cover with eclipse
Their pathway from the cradle to the tomb;

XI.

By thy most impious hell, and all its terrors;
By all the grief, the madness, and the guilt
Of thine impostures, which must be their errors,
That sand on which thy crumbling power is built;

XII.

By thy complicity with lust and hate,
Thy thirst for tears, thy hunger after gold,
The ready frauds which ever on thee wait,
The servile arts in which thou hast grown old;

XIII.

By thy most killing sneer, and by thy smile,
By all the acts and snares of thy black den,

And—for thou canst outweep the crocodile—
By thy false tears, those millstones braining men;

XIV.

By all the hate which checks a father's love;
By all the scorn which kills a father's care;
By those most impious hands that dared remove
Nature's high bounds; by thee; and by despair;—

XV.

Yes, the despair which bids a father groan,
And cry, "My children are no longer mine;
The blood within those veins may be mine own,
But, tyrant, their polluted souls are thine!"—

XVI.

I curse thee, though I hate thee not. O slave!
If thou couldst quench the earth-consuming hell
Of which thou art a demon, on thy grave
This curse should be a blessing. Fare thee well!

TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.

I.

THE billows on the beach are leaping around it;
The bark is weak and frail;
The sea looks black, and the clouds that bound it
Darkly strew the gale.
Come with me, thou delightful child,
Come with me! Though the wave is wild,
And the winds are loose, we must not stay,
Or the slaves of law may rend thee away.

II.

They have taken thy brother and sister dear,
They have made them unfit for thee;
They have withered the smile and dried the tear
Which should have been sacred to me.
To a blighting faith and a cause of crime
They have bound them slaves in youthly time;
And they will curse my name and thee
Because we fearless are and free.

III.

Come thou, beloved as thou art!
Another sleepeth still
Near thy sweet mother's anxious heart,
Which thou with joy wilt fill,
With fairest smiles of wonder thrown
On that which is indeed our own,
And which in distant lands will be
The dearest playmate unto thee.

IV.

Fear not the tyrants will rule for ever,
Or the priests of the evil faith;
They stand on the brink of that raging river
Whose waves they have tainted with death.
It is fed from the depth of a thousand dells,
Around them it foams and rages and swells;
And their swords and their sceptres I floating see,
Like wrecks, on the surge of eternity.

V.

Rest, rest, shriek not, thou gentle child!
The rocking of the boat thou fearest,
And the cold spray and the clamour wild?
There! sit between us two, thou dearest,—
Me and thy mother. Well we know
The storm at which thou tremblest so,
With all its dark and hungry graves,
Less cruel than the savage slaves
Who hunt thee o'er these sheltering waves.

VI.

This hour will in thy memory
Be a dream of days forgotten;
We soon shall dwell by the azure sea
Of serene and golden Italy,
Or Greece the mother of the free.
And I will teach thine infant tongue
To call upon their heroes old
In their own language, and will mould
Thy growing spirit in the flame
Of Grecian lore; that by such name
A patriot's birthright thou mayst claim.

LINES.

THAT time is dead for ever, child,
Drowned, frozen, dead for ever!
We look on the past;
And stare aghast
At the spectres, wailing, pale, and ghast,
Of hopes which thou and I beguiled
To death on life's dark river.

The stream we gazed on then rolled by;
Its waves are unreturning;
But we yet stand
In a lone land,
Like tombs to mark the memory
Of hopes and fears which fade and fly
In the light of life's dim morning.

5 *November* 1817.

ON FANNY GODWIN.

HER voice did quiver as we parted;
Yet knew I not that heart was broken
From which it came, and I departed
Heeding not the words then spoken.
Misery—O Misery,
This world is all too wide for thee!

LINES TO A CRITIC.

I.

HONEY from silkworms who can gather,
Or silk from the yellow bee?
The grass may grow in winter weather
As soon as hate in me.

II.

Hate men who cant, and men who pray,
And men who rail, like thee;
An equal passion to repay
They are not coy like me.

III.

Or seek some slave of power and gold
To be thy dear heart's mate;
Thy love will move that bigot cold
Sooner than me thy hate.

IV.

A passion like the one I prove
Cannot divided be;
I hate thy want of truth and love—
How should I then hate thee?

December 1817.

NOTE ON POEMS OF 1817, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

THE very illness that oppressed, and the aspect of death which had approached so near, Shelley, appear to have kindled to yet keener life the Spirit of Poetry in his heart. The restless thoughts kept awake by pain clothed themselves in verse. Much was composed during this year. The *Revolt of Islam*, written and printed, was a great effort—*Rosalind and Helen* was begun—and the fragments and poems I can trace to the same period show how full of passion and reflection were his solitary hours.

In addition to such poems as have an intelligible aim and shape, many a stray idea and transitory emotion found imperfect and abrupt expression, and then again lost themselves in silence. As he never wandered without a book and without implements of writing, I find many such, in his manuscript books, that scarcely bear record; while some of them, broken and vague as they are, will appear valuable to those who love Shelley's mind, and desire to trace its workings.

He projected also translating the Hymns of Homer; his version of several of the shorter ones remains, as well as that to Mercury already published in the *Posthumous Poems*. His readings this year were chiefly Greek. Besides the Hymns of Homer and the *Iliad*, he read the Dramas of Æschylus and Sophocles, the *Symposium* of Plato, and Arrian's *Historia Indica*. In Latin, Apuleius alone is named. In English, the Bible was his constant study; he read a great portion of it aloud in the evening. Among these evening readings, I find also mentioned the *Faery Queen;* and other modern works, the production of his contemporaries, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Moore, and Byron.

His life was now spent more in thought than action—he had lost the eager spirit which believed it could achieve what it projected for the benefit of mankind. And yet in the converse of daily life Shelley was far from being a melancholy man. He

was eloquent when philosophy or politics or taste were the subjects of conversation. He was playful; and indulged in the wild spirit that mocked itself and others—not in bitterness, but in sport. The author of *Nightmare Abbey* seized on some points of his character and some habits of his life when he painted Scythrop. He was not addicted to "port or madeira," but in youth he had read of "Illuminati and Eleutherarchs," and believed that he possessed the power of operating an immediate change in the minds of men and the state of society. These wild dreams had faded; sorrow and adversity had struck home; but he struggled with despondency as he did with physical pain. There are few who remember him sailing paper boats, and watching the navigation of his tiny craft with eagerness—or repeating with wild energy *The Ancient Mariner*, and Southey's *Old Woman of Berkeley;* but those who do will recollect that it was in such, and in the creations of his own fancy when that was most daring and ideal, that he sheltered himself from the storms and disappointments, the pain and sorrow, that beset his life. No words can express the anguish he felt when his elder children were torn from him. In his first resentment against the Chancellor, on the passing of the decree, he had written a curse, in which there breathes, besides haughty indignation, all the tenderness of a father's love, which could imagine and fondly dwell upon its loss and the consequences.

At one time, while the question was still pending, the Chancellor had said some words that seemed to intimate that Shelley should not be permitted the care of any of his children, and for a moment he feared that our infant son would be torn from us. He did not hesitate to resolve, if such were menaced, to abandon country, fortune, everything, and to escape with his child; and I find some unfinished stanzas addressed to this son, whom afterwards we lost at Rome, written under the idea that we might suddenly be forced to cross the sea, so to preserve him. This poem, as well as the one previously quoted, were not written to exhibit the pangs of distress to the public; they were the spontaneous outbursts of a man who brooded over his wrongs and woes, and was impelled to shed the grace of his genius over the uncontrollable emotions of his heart. I ought to observe that the fourth verse of this effusion is introduced in *Rosalind and Helen.* When afterwards this child died at Rome, he wrote, apropos of the English burying-ground in that city; "This spot is the repository of a sacred loss, of which the yearnings of a parent's heart are now prophetic; he is rendered immortal by love, as his memory is by death. My beloved child lies buried here. I envy death the body far less than the oppressors the minds of those whom they have torn from me. The one can only kill the body, the other crushes the affections."

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1818.

PASSAGE OF THE APENNINES.

LISTEN, listen, Mary mine,
To the whisper of the Apennine.
It bursts on the roof like the thunder's roar;
Or like the sea on a northern shore,

Heard in its raging ebb and flow
By the captives pent in the cave below.
The Apennine in the light of day
Is a mighty mountain dim and grey
Which between the earth and sky doth lay;
But, when night comes, a chaos dread
On the dim starlight then is spread,
And the Apennine walks abroad with the storm.

4 *May* 1818.

ON A DEAD VIOLET.

To Miss ——.

The odour from the flower is gone
Which like thy kisses breathed on me;
The colour from the flower is flown
Which glowed of thee and only thee!

A shrivelled, lifeless, vacant form,
It lies on my abandoned breast;
And mocks the heart, which yet is warm,
With cold and silent rest.

I weep—my tears revive it not;
I sigh—it breathes no more on me:
Its mute and uncomplaining lot
Is such as mine should be.

THE PAST.

Wilt thou forget the happy hours
Which we buried in Love's sweet bowers,
Heaping over their corpses cold
Blossoms and leaves instead of mould?
Blossoms which were the joys that fell,
And leaves, the hopes that yet remain.

Forget the dead, the past? Oh yet
There are ghosts that may take revenge for it!
Memories that make the heart a tomb,
Regrets which glide through the spirit's gloom,
And with ghastly whispers tell
That joy, once lost, is pain.

SONNET.

LIFT not the painted veil which those who live
Call Life; though unreal shapes be pictured there,
And it but mimic all we would believe
With colours idly spread. Behind, lurk Fear
And Hope, twin Destinies, who ever weave
Their shadows o'er the chasm sightless and drear.
I knew one who had lifted it:—he sought,
For his lost heart was tender, things to love,
But found them not, alas! nor was there aught
The world contains the which he could approve.
Through the unheeding many he did move,
A splendour among shadows, a bright blot
Upon this gloomy scene, a spirit that strove
For truth, and, like the Preacher, found it not.

LINES WRITTEN AMONG THE EUGANEAN HILLS.

MANY a green isle needs must be
In the deep wide sea of Misery;
Or the mariner, worn and wan,
Never thus could voyage on—
Day and night, and night and day,
Drifting on his dreary way,
With the solid darkness black
Closing round his vessel's track;
Whilst, above, the sunless sky,
Big with clouds, hangs heavily,—
And, behind, the tempest fleet
Hurries on with lightning feet,
Riving sail and cord and plank,
Till the ship has almost drank

Death from the o'er-brimming deep,
And sinks down, down, like that sleep
When the dreamer seems to be
Weltering through eternity,—
And the dim low line before
Of a dark and distant shore
Still recedes, as—ever still
Longing with divided will,
But no power to seek or shun—
He is ever drifted on
O'er the unreposing wave
To the haven of the grave.
What if there no friends will greet?
What if there no heart will meet
His with love's impatient beat?
Wander wheresoe'er he may,
Can he dream before that day
To find refuge from distress
In friendship's smile, in love's caress?
Then 'twill wreak him little woe
Whether such there be or no.
Senseless is the breast, and cold,
Which relenting love would fold;
Bloodless are the veins, and chill,
Which the pulse of pain did fill;
Every little living nerve
That from bitter words did swerve
Round the tortured lips and brow
Is like a sapless leaflet now
Frozen upon December's bough.

On the beach of a northern sea
Which tempests shake eternally
As once the wretch there lay to sleep,
Lies a solitary heap,
One white skull and seven dry bones,
On the margin of the stones,
Where a few grey rushes stand,
Boundaries of the sea and land.
Nor is heard one voice of wail
But the sea-mews' as they sail
O'er the billows of the gale,

Or the whirlwind up and down
Howling,—like a slaughtered town,
When a king in glory rides
Through the pomp of fratricides.
Those unburied bones around
There is many a mournful sound;
There is no lament for him,
Like a sunless vapour, dim,
Who once clothed with life and thought
What now moves nor murmurs not.

Ay, many flowering islands lie
In the waters of wide Agony:—
To such a one this morn was led
My bark, by soft winds piloted.
'Mid the mountains Euganean,
I stood listening to the pæan
With which the legioned rooks did hail
The sun's uprise majestical.
Gathering round with wings all hoar,
Through the dewy mist they soar
Like grey shades, till the eastern heaven
Bursts; and then, as clouds of even
Flecked with fire and azure lie
In the unfathomable sky,
So their plumes of purple grain,
Starred with drops of golden rain,
Gleam above the sunlight woods,
As in silent multitudes
On the morning's fitful gale
Through the broken mist they sail,
And the vapours cloven and gleaming
Follow, down the dark steep streaming,—
Till all is bright and clear and still
Round the solitary hill.

Beneath is spread like a green sea
The waveless plain of Lombardy,
Bounded by the vaporous air,
Islanded by cities fair.
Underneath Day's azure eyes,
Ocean's nursling, Venice lies,—

A peopled labyrinth of walls,
Amphitrite's destined halls,
Which her hoary sire now paves
With his blue and beaming waves.
Lo! the sun upsprings behind,
Broad, red, radiant, half-reclined
On the level quivering line
Of the waters crystalline;
And before that chasm of light,
As within a furnace bright,
Column, tower, and dome, and spire,
Shine like obelisks of fire,
Pointing with inconstant motion
From the altar of dark ocean
To the sapphire-tinted skies;
As the flames of sacrifice
From the marble shrines did rise,
As to pierce the dome of gold
Where Apollo spoke of old.

Sun-girt City! thou hast been
Ocean's child, and then his queen.
Now is come a darker day;
And thou soon must be his prey,
If the power that raised thee here
Hallow so thy watery bier.
A less drear ruin then than now,
With thy conquest-branded brow
Stooping to the slave of slaves
From thy throne, among the waves
Wilt thou be when the sea-mew
Flies, as once before it flew,
O'er thine isles depopulate,
And all is in its ancient state;
Save where many a palace-gate
With green sea-flowers overgrown
Like a rock of ocean's own,
Topples o'er the abandoned sea
As the tides change sullenly.
The fisher on his watery way
Wandering at the close of day
Will spread his sail and seize his oar

Till he pass the gloomy shore,
Lest thy dead should, from their sleep
Bursting o'er the starlight deep,
Lead a rapid masque of death
O'er the waters of his path.

Those who alone thy towers behold
Quivering through aërial gold,
As I now behold them here,
Would imagine not they were
Sepulchres where human forms,
Like pollution-nourished worms,
To the corpse of greatness cling,
Murdered and now mouldering.
But, if Freedom should awake
In her omnipotence, and shake
From the Celtic Anarch's hold
All the keys of dungeons cold
Where a hundred cities lie
Chained like thee ingloriously,
Thou and all thy sister band
Might adorn this sunny land,
Twining memories of old time
With new virtues more sublime.
If not, perish thou and they,—
Clouds which stain truth's rising day,
By her sun consumed away!
Earth can spare ye; while, like flowers,
In the waste of years and hours,
From your dust new nations spring
With more kindly blossoming.

Perish! Let there only be,
Floating o'er thy hearthless sea
As the garment of thy sky
Clothes the world immortally,
One remembrance, more sublime
Than the tattered pall of time
Which scarce hides thy visage wan:
That a tempest-cleaving swan
Of the songs of Albion,
Driven from his ancestral streams
By the might of evil dreams,

Found a nest in thee; and ocean
Welcomed him with such emotion
That its joy grew his, and sprung
From his lips like music flung
O'er a mighty thunder-fit,
Chastening terror. What though yet
Poesy's unfailing river,
Which through Albion winds for ever,
Lashing with melodious wave
Many a sacred poet's grave,
Mourn its latest nursling fled?
What though thou with all thy dead
Scarce canst for this fame repay
Aught thine own,—oh! rather say,
Though thy sins and slaveries foul
Overcloud a sunlike soul?
As the ghost of Homer clings
Round Scamander's wasting springs;
As divinest Shakspeare's might
Fills Avon and the world with light,
Like Omniscient Power, which he
Imaged 'mid mortality;
As the love from Petrarch's urn
Yet amid yon hills doth burn,
A quenchless lamp by which the heart
Sees things unearthly;—so thou art,
Mighty spirit! so shall be
The city that did refuge thee!

Lo, the sun floats up the sky,
Like thought-winged Liberty,
Till the universal light
Seems to level plain and height.
From the sea a mist has spread,
And the beams of morn lie dead
On the towers of Venice now,
Like its glory long ago.
By the skirts of that grey cloud
Many-domèd Padua proud
Stands, a peopled solitude
'Mid the harvest-shining plain;
Where the peasant heaps his grain

In the garner of his foe,
And the milk-white oxen slow
With the purple vintage strain
Heaped upon the creaking wain,
That the brutal Celt may swill
Drunken sleep with savage will.
And the sickle to the sword
Lies unchanged, though many a lord,
Like a weed whose shade is poison,
Overgrows this region's foison,
Sheaves of whom are ripe to come
To destruction's harvest-home.
Men must reap the things they sow;
Force from force must ever flow,
Or worse: but 'tis a bitter woe
That love or reason cannot change
The despot's rage, the slave's revenge.

Padua! (thou within whose walls
Those mute guests at festivals,
Son and Mother, Death and Sin,
Played at dice for Ezzelin,
Till Death cried, "I win, I win!"
And Sin cursed to lose the wager;
But Death promised, to assuage her,
That he would petition for
Her to be made Vice-Emperor,
When the destined years were o'er,
Over all between the Po
And the eastern Alpine snow,
Under the mighty Austrian:—
Sin smiled so as Sin only can;
And, since that time, ay long before,
Both have ruled from shore to shore,—
That incestuous pair who follow
Tyrants as the sun the swallow,
As repentance follows crime,
And as changes follow time:)—
In thine halls the lamp of learning,
Padua, now no more is burning.
Like a meteor whose wild way
Is lost over the grave of day,

It gleams betrayed and to betray.
Once remotest nations came
To adore that sacred flame,
When it lit not many a hearth
On this cold and gloomy earth;
Now new fires from antique light
Spring beneath the wide world's might,—
But their spark lies dead in thee,
Trampled out by Tyranny.
As the Norway woodman quells,
In the depth of piny dells,
One light flame among the brakes,
While the boundless forest shakes,
And its mighty trunks are torn
By the fire thus lowly born;—
The spark beneath his feet is dead;
He starts to see the flames it fed
Howling through the darkened sky
With myriad tongues victoriously,
And sinks down in fear;—so thou,
O Tyranny! beholdest now
Light around thee, and thou hearest
The loud flames ascend, and fearest.
Grovel on the earth! ay, hide
In the dust thy purple pride!

Noon descends around me now.
'Tis the noon of autumn's glow;
When a soft and purple mist,
Like a vaporous amethyst,
Or an air-dissolvèd star
Mingling light and fragrance, far
From the curved horizon's bound
To the point of heaven's profound
Fills the overflowing sky.
And the plains that silent lie
Underneath; the leaves unsodden
Where the infant Frost has trodden
With his morning-wingèd feet
Whose bright print is gleaming yet;
And the red and golden vines,
Piercing with their trellised lines

The rough dark-skirted wilderness;
The dun and bladed grass no less,
Pointing from this hoary tower
In the windless air; the flower
Glimmering at my feet; the line
Of the olive-sandalled Apennine
In the south dimly islanded;
And the Alps, whose snows are spread
High between the clouds and sun;
And of living things each one;
And my spirit, which so long
Darkened this swift stream of song,—
Interpenetrated lie
By the glory of the sky:
Be it love, light, harmony,
Odour, or the soul of all
Which from heaven like dew doth fall,
Or the mind which feeds this verse
Peopling the lone universe.

Noon descends; and after noon
Autumn's evening meets me soon,
Leading the infantine moon,
And that one star which to her
Almost seems to minister
Half the crimson light she brings
From the sunset's radiant springs.
And the soft dreams of the morn
(Which like wingèd winds had borne,
To that silent isle which lies
'Mid remembered agonies,
The frail bark of this lone being)
Pass, to other sufferers fleeing;
And its ancient pilot, Pain,
Sits beside the helm again.

Other flowering isles must be
In the sea of Life and Agony:
Other spirits float and fleè
O'er that gulf. Even now perhaps
On some rock the wild wave wraps,
With folded wings, they waiting sit
For my bark, to pilot it

To some calm and blooming cove;
Where for me and those I love
May a windless bower be built,
Far from passion, pain, and guilt,
In a dell 'mid lawny hills
Which the wild sea-murmur fills,
And soft sunshine, and the sound
Of old forests echoing round,
And the light and smell divine
Of all flowers that breathe and shine.
We may live so happy there
That the Spirits of the Air,
Envying us, may even entice
To our healing paradise
The polluting multitude.
But their rage would be subdued
By that clime divine and calm,
And the winds whose wings rain balm
On the uplifted soul, and leaves
Under which the bright sea heaves;
While each breathless interval
In their whisperings musical
The inspired soul supplies
With its own deep melodies,
And the love which heals all strife,
Circling, like the breath of life,
All things in that sweet abode
With its own mild brotherhood.
They, not it, would change; and soon
Every sprite beneath the moon
Would repent its envy vain,
And the earth grow young again.

October 1818.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN DEJECTION NEAR NAPLES.

I.

THE sun is warm, the sky is clear,
The waves are dancing fast and bright;
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
The purple noon's transparent might;

The breath of the moist earth is light
Around its unexpanded buds;
Like many a voice of one delight,
The winds', the birds', the ocean floods',
The city's voice itself, is soft like Solitude's.

II.

I see the deep's untrampled floor
With green and purple sea-weeds strown;
I see the waves upon the shore,
Like light dissolved, in star-showers thrown.
I sit upon the sands alone.
The lightning of the noontide ocean
Is flashing round me, and a tone
Arises from its measured motion,—
How sweet, did any heart now share in my emotion!

III.

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,
Nor peace within nor calm around;
Nor that content, surpassing wealth,
The sage in meditation found,
And walked with inward glory crowned;
Nor fame nor power nor love nor leisure.
Others I see whom these surround—
Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;—
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.

IV.

Yet now despair itself is mild,
Even as the winds and waters are;
I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne and yet must bear,—
Till death like sleep might steal on me,
And I might feel in the warm air
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

V.

Some might lament that I were cold,
As I when this sweet day is gone,
Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,
Insults with this untimely moan.

They might lament—for I am one
Whom men love not, and yet regret;
Unlike this day, which, when the sun
Shall on its stainless glory set,
Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in memory yet.

December 1818.

MISERY.

I.

COME, be happy,—sit near me,
Shadow-vested Misery:
Coy, unwilling, silent bride,
Mourning in thy robe of pride,
Desolation deified!

II.

Come, be happy,—sit near me:
Sad as I may seem to thee,
I am happier far than thou,
Lady whose imperial brow
Is endiademed with woe.

III.

Misery! we have known each other,
Like a sister and a brother
Living in the same lone home,
Many years: we must live some
Hours or ages yet to come.

IV.

'Tis an evil lot, and yet
Let us make the best of it;
If love can live when pleasure dies,
We two will love, till in our eyes
This heart's hell seem paradise.

V.

Come, be happy,—lie thee down
On the fresh grass newly mown,
Where the grasshopper doth sing
Merrily—one joyous thing
In a world of sorrowing.

VI.

There our tent shall be the willow,
And mine arm shall be thy pillow:
Sounds and odours, sorrowful
Because they once were sweet, shall lull
Us to slumber deep and dull.

VII.

Ha! thy frozen pulses flutter
With a love thou dar'st not utter.
Thou art murmuring—thou art weeping—
Is thine icy bosom leaping,
While my burning heart lies sleeping?

VIII.

Kiss me—oh! thy lips are cold!
Round my neck thine arms enfold—
They are soft, but chill and dead;
And thy tears upon my head
Burn like points of frozen lead.

IX.

Hasten to the bridal bed—
Underneath the grave 'tis spread:
In darkness may our love be hid,
Oblivion be our coverlid—
We may rest, and none forbid.

X.

Clasp me, till our hearts be grown
Like two shadows into one;
Till this dreadful transport may
Like a vapour fade away
In the sleep that lasts alway.

XI.

We may dream in that long sleep
That we are not those who weep;
Even as Pleasure dreams of thee,
Life-deserting Misery,
Thou mayst dream of her with me.

XII.

Let us laugh and make our mirth
At the shadows of the earth;

As dogs bay the moonlight clouds
Which, like spectres wrapped in shrouds,
Pass o'er night in multitudes.

XIII.

All the wide world, beside us,
Show like multitudinous
Puppets passing from a scene;
What but mockery can they mean
Where I am—where thou hast been?

1818.

NOTE ON POEMS OF 1818, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

We often hear of persons disappointed by a first visit to Italy. This was not Shelley's case. The aspect of its nature, its sunny sky, its majestic storms, of the luxuriant vegetation of the country, and the noble marble-built cities, enchanted him. The sight of the works of art was full enjoyment and wonder. He had not studied pictures or statues before; he now did so with the eye of taste, that referred not to the rules of schools, but to those of nature and truth. The first entrance to Rome opened to him a scene of remains of antique grandeur that far surpassed his expectations; and the unspeakable beauty of Naples and its environs added to the impression he received of the transcendent and glorious beauty of Italy.

Our winter was spent at Naples. Here he wrote the fragments of *Marenghi* and *the Woodman and the Nightingale*, which he afterwards threw aside. At this time, Shelley suffered greatly in health. He put himself under the care of a medical man, who promised great things, and made him endure severe bodily pain, without any good results. Constant and poignant physical suffering exhausted him; and though he preserved the appearance of cheerfulness, and often greatly enjoyed our wanderings in the environs of Naples, and our excursions on its sunny sea, yet many hours were passed when his thoughts, shadowed by illness, became gloomy,—and then he escaped to solitude, and in verses, which he hid from fear of wounding me, poured forth morbid but too natural bursts of discontent and sadness. One looks back with unspeakable regret and gnawing remorse to such periods; fancying that, had one been more alive to the nature of his feelings, and more attentive to soothe them, such would not have existed. And yet, enjoying as he appeared to do every sight or influence of earth or sky, it was difficult to imagine that any melancholy he showed was aught but the effect of the constant pain to which he was a martyr.

We lived in utter solitude. And such is often not the nurse of cheerfulness; for then, at least with those who have been exposed to adversity, the mind broods over its sorrows too intently; while the society of the enlightened, the witty, and the wise, enables us to forget ourselves by making us the sharers of the thoughts of others, which is a portion of the philosophy of happiness. Shelley never liked society in numbers,—it harassed and wearied him; but neither did he like loneliness, and usually, when alone, sheltered himself against memory and reflection in a book. But, with one or two whom he loved, he gave way to wild and joyous spirits, or in more serious conversation expounded his opinions with vivacity and eloquence. If an argument arose, no man ever argued better. He was clear, logical, and earnest, in supporting his own views; attentive, patient, and impartial, while listening to

those on the adverse side. Had not a wall of prejudice been raised at this time between him and his countrymen, how many would have sought the acquaintance of one whom to know was to love and to revere! How many of the more enlightened of his contemporaries have since regretted that they did not seek him! how very few knew his worth while he lived! and, of those few, several were withheld by timidity or envy from declaring their sense of it. But no man was ever more enthusiastically loved—more looked up to, as one superior to his fellows in intellectual endowments and moral worth, by the few who knew him well, and had sufficient nobleness of soul to appreciate his superiority. His excellence is now acknowledged; but, even while admitted, not duly appreciated. For who, except those who were acquainted with him, can imagine his unwearied benevolence, his generosity, his systematic forbearance? And still less is his vast superiority in intellectual attainments sufficiently understood—his sagacity, his clear understanding, his learning, his prodigious memory. All these, as displayed in conversation, were known to few while he lived, and are now silent in the tomb:

> "Ahi orbo mondo ingrato!
> Gran cagion hai di dover pianger meco,
> Chè quel ben ch' era in te perdut' hai seco."

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1819.

THE MASQUE OF ANARCHY.

I.

As I lay asleep in Italy,
There came a voice from over the sea,
And with great power it forth led me
To walk in the visions of Poesy.

II.

I met Murder on the way—
He had a mask like Castlereagh.
Very smooth he looked, yet grim;
Seven bloodhounds followed him.

III.

All were fat; and well they might
Be in admirable plight,
For one by one, and two by two,
He tossed them human hearts to chew,
Which from his wide cloak he drew.

IV.

Next came Fraud, and he had on,
Like Lord Eldon, an ermine gown.

His big tears, for he wept well,
Turned to millstones as they fell;

V.

And the little children who
Round his feet played to and fro,
Thinking every tear a gem,
Had their brains knocked out by them.

VI.

Clothed with the bible as with light,
And the shadow of the night,
Like Sidmouth next, Hypocrisy
On a crocodile came by.

VII.

And many more Destructions played
In this ghastly masquerade,—
All disguised, even to the eyes,
Like bishops, lawyers, peers, or spies.

VIII.

Last come Anarchy; he rode
On a white horse splashed with blood;
He was pale even to the lips,
Like Death in the Apocalypse.

IX.

And he wore a kingly crown;
In his hand a sceptre shone;
On his brow this mark I saw—
"I am God, and King, and Law!"

X.

With a pace stately and fast
Over English land he passed,
Trampling to a mire of blood
The adoring multitude.

XI.

And a mighty troop around
With their trampling shook the ground,
Waving each a bloody sword
For the service of their lord.

XII.

And with glorious triumph they
Rode through England, proud and gay,
Drunk as with intoxication
Of the wine of desolation.

XIII.

O'er fields and towns, from sea to sea,
Passed the pageant swift and free,
Tearing up and trampling down,
Till they came to London town.

XIV.

And each dweller, panic-stricken,
Felt his heart with terror sicken,
Hearing the tempestuous cry
Of the triumph of Anarchy.

XV.

For with pomp to meet him came,
Clothed in arms like blood and flame,
The hired murderers who did sing,
"Thou art God, and Law, and King!

XVI.

"We have waited, weak and lone,
For thy coming, Mighty One!
Our purses are empty, our swords are cold;
Give us glory, and blood, and gold."

XVII.

Lawyers and priests, a motley crowd,
To the earth their pale brows bowed,—
Like a bad prayer not over loud,
Whispering "Thou art Law and God!"

XVIII.

Then all cried with one accord,
"Thou art King, and Law, and Lord;
Anarchy, to thee we bow,
Be thy name made holy now!"

XIX.

And Anarchy the skeleton
Bowed and grinned to every one

As well as if his education
Had cost ten millions to the nation.

XX.

For he knew the palaces
Of our kings were nightly his;
His the sceptre, crown, and globe,
And the gold-inwoven robe.

XXI.

So he sent his slaves before
To seize upon the Bank and Tower,
And was proceeding with intent
To meet his pensioned parliament,

XXII.

When one fled past, a maniac maid,
And her name was Hope, she said,
But she looked more like Despair;
And she cried out in the air:

XXIII.

"My father Time is weak and grey
With waiting for a better day;
See how idiot-like he stands,
Fumbling with his palsied hands!

XXIV.

"He has had child after child,
And the dust of death is piled
Over every one but me—
Misery! oh Misery!"

XXV.

Then she lay down in the street
Right before the horses' feet,
Expecting with a patient eye
Murder, Fraud, and Anarchy:—

XXVI.

When between her and her foes
A mist, a light, an image rose,
Small at first, and weak and frail
Like the vapour of the vale:

XXVII.

Till, as clouds grow on the blast
Like tower-crowned giants striding fast,
And glare with lightnings as they fly,
And speak in thunder to the sky,

XXVIII.

It grew—a shape arrayed in mail
Brighter than the viper's scale,
And upborne on wings whose grain
Was like the light of sunny rain.

XXIX.

On its helm seen far away
A planet, like the morning's lay;
And those plumes its light rained through,
Like a shower of crimson dew.

XXX.

With step as soft as wind it passed
O'er the heads of men: so fast
That they knew the presence there,
And looked—and all was empty air.

XXXI.

As flowers beneath May's footsteps waken,
As stars from Night's loose hair are shaken,
As waves arise when loud winds call,
Thoughts sprung where'er that step did fall.

XXXII.

And the prostrate multitude
Looked—and, ankle-deep in blood,
Hope, that maiden most serene,
Was walking with a quiet mien;

XXXIII.

And Anarchy, the ghastly birth,
Lay dead earth upon the earth;
The horse of Death, tameless as wind,
Fled, and with his hoofs did grind
To dust the murderers thronged behind.

XXXIV.

A rushing light of clouds and splendour,
A sense awakening and yet tender,

Was heard and felt—and at its close
These words of joy and fear arose;

XXXV.

As if their own indignant Earth,
Which gave the sons of England birth,
Had felt their blood upon her brow,
And, shuddering with a mother's throe,

XXXVI.

Had turned every drop of blood
By which her face had been bedewed
To an accent unwithstood,
As if her heart had cried aloud.

XXXVII.

"Men of England, heirs of glory,
Heroes of unwritten story,
Nurslings of one mighty mother,
Hopes of her and one another!

XXXVIII.

"Rise, like lions after slumber,
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth, like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you!
Ye are many, they are few!

XXXIX.

What is Freedom? Ye can tell
That which Slavery is too well,
For its very name has grown
To an echo of your own.

XL.

"'Tis to work, and have such pay
As just keeps life from day to day,
In your limbs as in a cell
For the tyrants' use to dwell:

XLI.

"So that ye for them are made
Loom and plough and sword and spade;
With or without your own will, bent
To their defence and nourishment.

XLII.

"'Tis to see your children weak
With their mothers pine and peak
When the winter winds are bleak:—
They are dying whilst I speak.

XLIII.

"'Tis to hunger for such diet
As the rich man in his riot
Casts to the fat dogs that lie
Surfeiting beneath his eye.

XLIV.

"'Tis to let the ghost of Gold
Take from toil a thousandfold
More than e'er his substance could
In the tyrannies of old:

XLV.

"Paper coin—that forgery
Of the title-deeds which ye
Hold to something of the worth
Of the inheritance of Earth.

XLVI.

"'Tis to be a slave in soul,
And to hold no strong control
Over your own wills, but be
All that others make of ye.

XLVII.

"And, at length when ye complain
With a murmur weak and vain,
'Tis to see the tyrant's crew
Ride over your wives and you:—
Blood is on the grass like dew!

XLVIII.

"Then it is to feel revenge,
Fiercely thirsting to exchange
Blood for blood, and wrong for wrong:
Do not thus when ye are strong!

XLIX.

"Birds find rest in narrow nest,
When weary of their wingèd quest;

Beasts find fare in woody lair
When storm and snow are in the air;

L.

"Horses, oxen, have a home
When from daily toil they come;
Household dogs, when the wind roars,
Find a home within warm doors;

LI.

"Asses, swine, have litter spread,
And with fitting food are fed;
All things have a home but one:—
Thou, O Englishman, hast none!

LII.

"This is Slavery!—Savage men,
Or wild beasts within a den,
Would endure not as ye do:
But such ills they never knew.

LIII.

"What art thou, Freedom? Oh! could slaves
Answer from their living graves
This demand, tyrants would flee
Like a dream's dim imagery.

LIV.

"Thou art not, as impostors say,
A shadow soon to pass away,
A superstition, and a name
Echoing from the cave of Fame.

LV.

"For the labourer, thou art bread
And a comely table spread,
From his daily labour come,
In a neat and happy home.

LVI.

"Thou art clothes and fire and food
For the trampled multitude.
No—in countries that are free
Such starvation cannot be
As in England now we see!

LVII.

"To the rich thou art a check;
When his foot is on the neck
Of his victim, thou dost make
That he treads upon a snake.

LVIII.

"Thou art justice: ne'er for gold
May thy righteous laws be sold
As laws are in England; thou
Shield'st alike the high and low.

LIX.

"Thou art wisdom: freemen never
Dream that God will damn for ever
All who think those things untrue
Of which priests make such ado.

LX.

"Thou art peace: never by thee
Would blood and treasure wasted be
As tyrants wasted them when all
Leagued to quench thy flame in Gaul.

LXI.

"What if English toil and blood
Was poured forth even as a flood?
It availed, O Liberty,
To dim—but not extinguish thee.

LXII.

"Thou art love: the rich have kissed
Thy feet, and, like him following Christ,
Given their substance to the free,
And through the rough world followed thee.

LXIII.

"Oh! turn their wealth to arms, and make
War, for thy beloved sake,
On wealth and war and fraud; whence they
Drew the power which is their prey.

LXIV.

"Science, and poetry, and thought,
Are thy lamps; they make the lot

Of the dwellers in a cot
Such they curse their Maker not.

LXV.

"Spirit, patience, gentleness,
All that can adorn and bless,
Art thou. Let deeds, not words, express
Thine exceeding loveliness.

LXVI.

"Let a great assembly be
Of the fearless and the free
On some spot of English ground
Where the plains stretch wide around.

LXVII.

"Let the blue sky overhead,
The green earth on which ye tread,
All that must eternal be,
Witness the solemnity.

LXVIII.

"From the corners uttermost
Of the bounds of English coast;
From every hut, village, and town,
Where those who live and suffer moan
For others' misery or their own;

LXIX.

"From the workhouse and the prison
Where, pale as corpses newly risen,
Women, children, young and old,
Groan for pain, and weep for cold;

LXX.

"From the haunts of daily life
Where is waged the daily strife
With common wants and common cares
Which sow the human heart with tares;

LXXI.

"Lastly, from the palaces
Where the murmur of distress
Echoes like the distant sound
Of a wind alive around—

LXXII.

"Those prison-halls of wealth and fashion,
Where some few feel such compassion,
For those who groan and toil and wail,
As must make their brethren pale ;—

LXXIII.

"Ye who suffer woes untold
Or to feel or to behold
Your lost country bought and sold
With a price of blood and gold !

LXXIV.

"Let a vast assembly be,
And with great solemnity
Declare with ne'er-said words that ye
Are, as God has made ye, free !

LXXV.

"Be your strong and simple words
Keen to wound as sharpened swords,
And wide as targes let them be,
With their shade to cover ye.

LXXVI.

"Let the tyrants pour around
With a quick and startling sound,
Like the loosening of a sea,
Troops of armed emblazonry.

LXXVII.

"Let the charged artillery drive,
Till the dead air seems alive
With the clash of clanging wheels,
And the tramp of horses' heels.

LXXVIII.

"Let the fixèd bayonet
Gleam with sharp desire to wet
Its bright point in English blood,
Looking keen as one for food.

LXXIX.

"Let the horsemen's scimitars
Wheel and flash, like sphereless stars

Thirsting to eclipse their burning
In a sea of death and mourning.

LXXX.

"Stand ye calm and resolute,
Like a forest close and mute,
With folded arms, and looks which are
Weapons of an unvanquished war.

LXXXI.

"And let Panic, who outspeeds
The career of armèd steeds,
Pass, a disregarded shade,
Through your phalanx undismayed.

LXXXII.

"Let the laws of your own land,
Good or ill, between ye stand,
Hand to hand, and foot to foot,
Arbiters of the dispute :—

LXXXIII.

"The old laws of England—they
Whose reverend heads with age are grey,
Children of a wiser day ;
And whose solemn voice must be
Thine own echo—Liberty !

LXXXIV.

"On those who first should violate
Such sacred heralds in their state
Rest the blood that must ensue ;
And it will not rest on you.

LXXXV.

"And, if then the tyrants dare,
Let them ride among you there,
Slash and stab and maim and hew :
What they like, that let them do.

LXXXVI.

"With folded arms and steady eyes,
And little fear and less surprise,
Look upon them as they slay,
Till their rage has died away

LXXXVII.

"Then they will return with shame,
To the place from which they came,
And the blood thus shed will speak
In hot blushes on their cheek.

LXXXVIII.

"Every woman in the land
Will point at them as they stand—
They will hardly dare to greet
Their acquaintance in the street:

LXXXIX.

"And the bold true warriors
Who have hugged danger in the wars
Will turn to those who would be free,
Ashamed of such base company:

XC.

"And that slaughter to the nation
Shall steam up like inspiration,
Eloquent, oracular,
A volcano heard afar:

XCI.

"And these words shall then become
Like Oppression's thundered doom,
Ringing through each heart and brain,
Heard again—again—again!

XCII.

"Rise, like lions after slumber,
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth, like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you!
Ye are many—they are few!"

LINES

WRITTEN DURING THE CASTLEREAGH ADMINISTRATION.

I.

Corpses are cold in the tomb;
Stones on the pavement are dumb;
Abortions are dead in the womb,

And their mothers look pale—like the white shore
Of Albion, free no more.

II.

Her sons are as stones in the way—
They are masses of senseless clay—
They are trodden, and move not away;
The abortion with which *she* travaileth
Is Liberty, smitten to death.

III.

Then trample and dance, thou oppressor,
For thy victim is no redressor!
Thou art sole lord and possessor
Of her corpses and clods and abortions—they pave
Thy path to the grave.

IV.

Hear'st thou the festival din
Of Death and Destruction and Sin
And Wealth crying "Havoc!" within?
'Tis the bacchanal triumph which makes Truth dumb,
Thine epithalamium.

V.

Ay, marry thy ghastly Wife!
Let Fear and Disquiet and Strife
Spread thy couch in the chamber of Life!
Marry Ruin, thou tyrant! and God be thy guide
To the bed of the bride!

SONG—TO THE MEN OF ENGLAND.

I.

MEN of England, wherefore plough
For the lords who lay ye low?
Wherefore weave with toil and care
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

II.

Wherefore feed and clothe and save,
From the cradle to the grave,
Those ungrateful drones who would
Drain your sweat—nay, drink your blood?

III.

Wherefore, Bees of England, forge
Many a weapon, chain, and scourge,
That these stingless drones may spoil
The forced produce of your toil?

IV.

Have ye leisure, comfort, calm,
Shelter, food, love's gentle balm?
Or what is it ye buy so dear
With your pain and with your fear?

V.

The seed ye sow another reaps;
The wealth ye find another keeps;
The robes ye weave another wears;
The arms ye forge another bears.

VI.

Sow seed,—but let no tyrant reap;
Find wealth,—let no impostor heap;
Weave robes,—let not the idle wear;
Forge arms, in your defence to bear.

VII.

Shrink to your cellars, holes, and cells;
In halls ye deck another dwells.
Why shake the chains ye wrought? Ye see
The steel ye tempered glance on ye.

VIII.

With plough and spade and hoe and loom,
Trace your grave, and build your tomb,
And weave your winding-sheet, till fair
England be your sepulchre!

ENGLAND IN 1819.

An old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king,—
Princes, the dregs of their dull race, who flow
Through public scorn, mud from a muddy spring,—
Rulers who neither see nor feel nor know,
But leech-like to their fainting country cling,
Till they drop, blind in blood, without a blow,—

A people starved and stabbed in the untilled field,—
An army which liberticide and prey
Make as a two-edged sword to all who wield,—
Golden and sanguine laws which tempt and slay,—
Religion Christless, Godless, a book sealed,—
A Senate—time's worst statute unrepealed,—
Are graves from which a glorious Phantom may
Burst to illumine our tempestuous day.

SIMILES FOR TWO POLITICAL CHARACTERS OF 1819.

I.

As from an ancestral oak
Two empty ravens sound their clarion,
Yell by yell and croak by croak,
When they scent the noonday smoke
Of fresh human carrion :—

II.

As two gibbering night-birds flit
From their bowers of deadly hue
Through the night to frighten it,
When the moon is in a fit,
And the stars are none or few :—

III.

As a shark and dogfish wait
Under an Atlantic isle
For the negro-ship whose freight
Is the theme of their debate,
Wrinkling their red gills the while—

IV.

Are ye, two vultures sick for battle,
Two scorpions under one wet stone,
Two bloodless wolves whose dry throats rattle,
Two crows perched on the murrained cattle,
Two vipers tangled into one.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

I.

God prosper, speed, and save,
God raise from England's grave,
Her murdered Queen!
Pave with swift victory
The steps of Liberty,
Whom Britons own to be
Immortal Queen!

II.

See, she comes throned on high
On swift Eternity!
God save the Queen!
Millions on millions wait,
Firm, rapid, and elate,
On her majestic state—
God save the Queen!

[III.

She is Thine own pure soul
Moulding the mighty whole.
God save the Queen!
She is Thine own deep love
Rained down from heaven above.
Wherever she rest or move,
God save our Queen!

IV.

'Wilder her enemies
In their own dark disguise!
God save our Queen!
All earthly things that dare
Her sacred name to bear,
Strip them, as kings are, bare;
God save the Queen!

V.

Be her eternal throne
Built in our hearts alone—
God save the Queen!

Let the oppressor hold
Canopied seats of gold;
She sits enthroned of old
O'er our hearts Queen.

VI.

Lips touched by seraphim
Breathe out the choral hymn
"God save the Queen!"
Sweet as if angels sang,
Loud as that trumpet's clang
Wakening the world's dead gang,—
God save the Queen!

AN ODE TO THE ASSERTERS OF LIBERTY.

I.

ARISE, arise, arise!
There is blood on the earth that denies ye bread!
Be your wounds like eyes
To weep for the dead, the dead, the dead.
What other grief were it just to pay?
Your sons, your wives, your brethren, were they!
Who said they were slain on the battle-day?

II.

Awaken, awaken, awaken!
The slave and the tyrant are twin-born foes.
Be the cold chains shaken
To the dust where your kindred repose, repose:
Their bones in the grave will start and move
When they hear the voices of those they love
Most loud in the holy combat above.

III.

Wave, wave high the banner
When Freedom is riding to conquest by:
Though the slaves that fan her
Be Famine and Toil, giving sigh for sigh.
And ye who attend her imperial car,
Lift not your hands in the banded war,
But in her defence whose children ye are.

IV.

Glory, glory, glory,
To those who have greatly suffered and done!
Never name in story
Was greater than that which ye shall have won.
Conquerors have conquered their foes alone,
Whose revenge, pride, and power, they have overthrown:
Ride ye, more victorious, over your own.

V.

Bind, bind every brow
With crownals of violet, ivy, and pine:
Hide the blood-stains now
With hues which sweet Nature has made divine—
Green strength, azure hope, and eternity.
But let not the pansy among them be;
Ye were injured, and that means memory.

ODE TO HEAVEN.

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

FIRST SPIRIT.

PALACE-ROOF of cloudless nights!
Paradise of golden lights!
Deep, immeasurable, vast,
Which art now, and which wert then!
Of the present and the past,
Of the eternal where and when,
Presence-chamber, temple, home!
Ever-canopying dome
Of acts and ages yet to come!

Glorious shapes have life in thee:—
Earth, and all earth's company;
Living globes which ever throng
Thy deep chasms and wildernesses;
And green worlds that glide along;
And swift stars with flashing tresses;
And icy moons most cold and bright;
And mighty suns beyond the night,
Atoms of intensest light.

Even thy name is as a god,
Heaven! for thou art the abode
Of that Power which is the glass
  Wherein man his nature sees.
Generations as they pass
  Worship thee with bended knees.
Their unremaining gods and they
Like a river roll away;
Thou remainest such alway.

SECOND SPIRIT.

Thou art but the mind's first chamber,
Round which its young fancies clamber,
Like weak insects in a cave
  Lighted up by stalactites;
But the portal of the grave,—
  Where a world of new delights
Will make thy best glories seem
But a dim and noonday gleam
From the shadow of a dream!

THIRD SPIRIT.

Peace! the abyss is wreathed with scorn
At your presumption, atom-born!
What is heaven? and what are ye
  Who its brief expanse inherit?
What are suns and spheres which flee
  With the instinct of that Spirit
Of which ye are but a part?
Drops which Nature's mighty heart
Drives through thinnest veins. Depart!

What is heaven? A globe of dew,
Filling in the morning new
Some eyed flower whose young leaves waken
  On an unimagined world:—
Constellated suns unshaken,
  Orbits measureless, are furled
In that frail and fading sphere,
With ten millions gathered there,
To tremble, gleam, and disappear.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND.

I.

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes! O thou
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill;

Wild Spirit which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh hear!

II.

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of heaven and ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning! there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: Oh hear!

III.

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers
So sweet the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow grey with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: Oh hear!

IV.

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! if even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seemed a vision,—I would ne'er have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee—tameless, and swift, and proud.

V.

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own?
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
Like withered leaves, to quicken a new birth;
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth
The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

AN EXHORTATION.

CHAMELEONS feed on light and air;
Poets' food is love and fame.
If in this wide world of care
Poets could but find the same
With as little toil as they,
Would they ever change their hue
As the light chameleons do,
Suiting it to every ray
Twenty times a-day?

Poets are on this cold earth
As chameleons might be
Hidden from their early birth
In a cave beneath the sea.
Where light is, chameleons change;
Where love is not, poets do.
Fame is love disguised: if few
Find either, never think it strange
That poets range.

Yet dare not stain with wealth or power
A poet's free and heavenly mind.
If bright chameleons should devour
Any food but beams and wind,
They would grow as earthly soon
As their brother lizards are.
Children of a sunnier star,
Spirits from beyond the moon,
Oh! refuse the boon!

THE INDIAN SERENADE.

I ARISE from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,

When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright.
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me—who knows how?
To thy chamber window sweet!
The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream—
The champak odours fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint
It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine,
Beloved as thou art!
Oh lift me from the grass!
I die, I faint, I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast:
Oh! press it close to thine again,
Where it will break at last.

LINES WRITTEN FOR MISS SOPHIA STACEY.

I.

THOU art fair, and few are fairer,
Of the nymphs of earth or ocean.
They are robes that fit the wearer—
Those soft limbs of thine, whose motion
Ever falls and shifts and glances,
As the life within them dances.

II.

Thy deep eyes, a double planet,
Gaze the wisest into madness
With soft clear fire. The winds that fan it
Are those thoughts of gentle gladness
Which, like zephyrs on the billow,
Make thy gentle soul their pillow.

III.

If whatever face thou paintest
In those eyes grows pale with pleasure,

If the fainting soul is faintest
When it hears thy harp's wild measure,
Wonder not that, when thou speakest,
Of the weak my heart is weakest.

IV.

As dew beneath the wind of morning,
As the sea which whirlwinds waken,
As the birds at thunder's warning,
As aught mute but deeply shaken,
As one who feels an unseen spirit,
Is my heart when thine is near it.

Via Val Fonda, Florence.

SHELLEY'S NOTE ON THE ODE TO THE WEST WIND.

P. 207.

THIS poem was conceived and chiefly written in a wood that skirts the Arno, near Florence, and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapours which pour down the autumnal rains. They began, as I foresaw, at sunset, with a violent tempest of hail and rain, attended by that magnificent thunder and lightning peculiar to the Cisalpine regions.

The phenomenon alluded to at the conclusion of the third stanza is well known to naturalists. The vegetation at the bottom of the sea, of rivers, and of lakes, sympathizes with that of the land in the change of seasons, and is consequently influenced by the winds which announce it.

NOTE ON POEMS OF 1819, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

THOUGH Shelley's first eager desire to excite his countrymen to resist openly the oppressions existent during "the good old times" had faded with early youth, still his warmest sympathies were for the people. He was a republican, and loved a democracy. He looked on all human beings as inheriting an equal right to possess the dearest privileges of our nature: the necessaries of life when fairly earned by labour, and intellectual instruction. His hatred of any despotism that looked upon the people as not to be consulted, or protected from want and ignorance, was intense. He was residing near Leghorn, at Villa Valsovano, writing *The Cenci*, when the news of the Manchester Massacre reached us; it roused in him violent emotions of indignation and compassion. The great truth that the many, if accordant and resolute, could control the few, as was shown some years after, made him long to teach his injured countrymen how to resist. Inspired by these feelings, he wrote the *Masque of Anarchy*, which he sent to his friend Leigh Hunt, to be inserted in the *Examiner*, of which he was then the Editor.

"I did not insert it," Leigh Hunt writes in his valuable and interesting preface to this poem, when he printed it in 1832, "because I thought that the public at large had not become sufficiently discerning to do justice to the sincerity and kind-heartedness of the spirit that walked in this flaming robe of verse." Days of outrage have passed away, and with them the exasperation that would cause such an appeal to the many to be injurious. Without being aware of them, they at one time acted on

his suggestions, and gained the day. But they rose when human life was respected by the minister in power; such was not the case during the administration which excited Shelley's abhorrence.

The poem was written for the people, and is therefore in a more popular tone than usual; portions strike as abrupt and unpolished, but many stanzas are all his own. I heard him repeat, and admired, those beginning

"My Father Time is old and grey,"

before I knew to what poem they were to belong. But the most touching passage is that which describes the blessed effects of liberty; they might make a patriot of any man whose heart was not wholly closed against his humbler fellow-creatures.

Shelley loved the people; and respected them as often more virtuous, as always more suffering, and therefore more deserving of sympathy, than the great. He believed that a clash between the two classes of society was inevitable, and he eagerly ranged himself on the people's side. He had an idea of publishing a series of poems adapted expressly to commemorate their circumstances and wrongs. He wrote a few; but, in those days of prosecution for libel, they could not be printed. They are not among the best of his productions, a writer being always shackled when he endeavours to write down to the comprehension of those who could not understand or feel a highly imaginative style; but they show his earnestness, and with what heartfelt compassion he went home to the direct point of injury—that oppression is detestable as being the parent of starvation, nakedness, and ignorance. Besides these outpourings of compassion and indignation, he had meant to adorn the cause he loved with loftier poetry of glory and triumph: such is the scope of the *Ode to the Asserters of Liberty*. He sketched also a new version of our national anthem, as addressed to Liberty.

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1820.

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY.

THE fountains mingle with the river,
And the rivers with the ocean;
The winds of heaven mix for ever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle—
Why not I with thine?

See, the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea;—
What are all these kissings worth,
If thou kiss not me?

January 1820.

ODE TO LIBERTY.

Yet, Freedom, yet, thy banner, torn but flying,
Streams like a thunder-storm against the wind.—BYRON.

I.

A GLORIOUS people vibrated again
The lightning of the nations: Liberty,
From heart to heart, from tower to tower, o'er Spain,
Scattering contagious fire into the sky,
Gleamed. My soul spurned the chains of its dismay,
And in the rapid plumes of song
Clothed itself, sublime and strong;
(As a young eagle soars the morning clouds among)
Hovering in verse o'er its accustomed prey:
Till from its station in the heaven of Fame
The Spirit's whirlwind rapt it; and the ray
Of the remotest sphere of living flame
Which paves the void was from behind it flung,
As foam from a ship's swiftness, when there came
A voice out of the deep; I will record the same.

II.

"The sun and the serenest moon sprang forth;
The burning stars of the abyss were hurled
Into the depths of heaven; the dædal earth,
That island in the ocean of the world,
Hung in its cloud of all-sustaining air.
But this divinest universe
Was yet a chaos and a curse,
For Thou wert not: but, power from worst producing worse,
The spirit of the beasts was kindled there,
And of the birds, and of the watery forms,—
And there was war among them, and despair
Within them, raging without truce or terms.
The bosom of their violated nurse
Groaned, for beasts warred on beasts, and worms on worms,
And men on men; each heart was as a hell of storms.

III.

"Man, the imperial shape, then multiplied
His generations under the pavilion
Of the sun's throne: palace and pyramid,
Temple and prison, to many a swarming million

Were as to mountain-wolves their ragged caves.
This human living multitude
Was savage, cunning, blind, and rude,—
For Thou wert not; but o'er the populous solitude,
Like one fierce cloud over a waste of waves,
Hung Tyranny; beneath sate deified
The Sister-pest, congregator of slaves
Into the shadow of her pinions wide.
Anarchs and priests, who feed on gold and blood
Till with the stain their inmost souls are dyed,
Drove the astonished herds of men from every side.

IV.

"The nodding promontories and blue isles
And cloud-like mountains and dividuous waves
Of Greece basked glorious in the open smiles
Of favouring heaven: from their enchanted caves
Prophetic echoes flung dim melody
On the unapprehensive wild.
The vine, the corn, the olive mild,
Grew, savage yet, to human use unreconciled;
And, like unfolded flowers beneath the sea,
Like the man's thought dark in the infant's brain,
Like aught that is which wraps what is to be,
Art's deathless dreams lay veiled by many a vein
Of Parian stone: and, yet a speechless child,
Verse murmured, and Philosophy did strain
Her lidless eyes for Thee;—when o'er the Ægean main

V.

"Athens arose: a city such as vision
Builds from the purple crags and silver towers
Of battlemented cloud, as in derision
Of kingliest masonry: the ocean floors
Pave it; the evening sky pavilions it;
Its portals are inhabited
By thunder-zonèd winds, each head
Within its cloudy wings with sun-fire garlanded,
A divine work! Athens diviner yet
Gleamed with its crest of columns, on the will
Of man as on a mount of diamond set;
For Thou wert, and thine all-creative skill
Peopled, with forms that mock the eternal dead

In marble immortality, that hill
Which was thine earliest throne and latest oracle.

VI.

Within the surface of time's fleeting river
Its wrinkled image lies, as then it lay,
Immovably unquiet, and for ever
It trembles, but it cannot pass away.
The voices of thy bards and sages thunder
With an earth-awakening blast
Through the caverns of the past;
Religion veils her eyes, Oppression shrinks aghast:
A wingèd sound of joy and love and wonder,
Which soars where expectation never flew,
Rending the veil of space and time asunder.
One ocean feeds the clouds and streams and dew;
One sun illumines heaven; one Spirit vast
With life and love makes chaos ever new;—
As Athens doth the world with thy delight renew.

VII.

"Then Rome was, and from thy deep bosom fairest,
Like a wolf-cub from a Cadmæan Mænad,
She drew the milk of greatness, though thy dearest
From that elysian food was yet unweanèd;
And many a deed of terrible uprightness
By thy sweet love was sanctified;
And in thy smile and by thy side
Saintly Camillus lived, and firm Attilius died.
But, when tears stained thy robe of vestal whiteness,
And gold profaned thy capitolian throne,
Thou didst desert, with spirit-wingèd lightness,
The senate of the tyrants: they sunk prone,
Slaves of one tyrant. Palatinus sighed
Faint echoes of Ionian song; that tone
Thou didst delay to hear, lamenting to disown.

VIII.

"From what Hyrcanian glen or frozen hill,
Or piny promontory of the Arctic main,
Or utmost islet inaccessible,
Didst thou lament the ruin of thy reign,
Teaching the woods and waves, and desert rocks,

And every Naiad's ice-cold urn,
To talk in echoes sad and stern
Of that sublimest lore which man had dared unlearn?
For neither didst thou watch the wizard flocks
Of the Scald's dreams, nor haunt the Druid's sleep.
What if the tears rained through thy shattered locks
Were quickly dried? for thou didst groan, not weep,
When from its sea of death, to kill and burn,
The Galilean serpent forth did creep,
And made thy world an undistinguishable heap.

IX.

"A thousand years the Earth cried 'Where art thou?'
And then the shadow of thy coming fell
On Saxon Alfred's olive-cinctured brow:
And many a warrior-peopled citadel,
Like rocks which fire lifts out of the flat deep,
Arose in sacred Italy,
Frowning o'er the tempestuous sea
Of kings and priests and slaves, in tower-crowned majesty.
That multitudinous anarchy did sweep
And burst around their walls like idle foam,
Whilst from the human spirit's deepest deep
Strange melody with love and awe struck dumb
Dissonant arms; and Art, which cannot die,
With divine wand traced on our earthly home
Fit imagery to pave heaven's everlasting dome.

X.

"Thou Huntress swifter than the Moon! thou terror
Of the world's wolves! thou bearer of the quiver
Whose sunlike shafts pierce tempest-wingèd Error,
As light may pierce the clouds when they dissever
In the calm regions of the orient day!
Luther caught thy wakening glance:
Like lightning from his leaden lance
Reflected, it dissolved the visions of the trance
In which, as in a tomb, the nations lay;
And England's prophets hailed thee as their queen,
In songs whose music cannot pass away
Though it must flow for ever. Not unseen,
Before the spirit-sighted countenance
Of Milton, didst thou pass from the sad scene
Beyond whose night he saw, with a dejected mien.

XI.

"The eager Hours and unreluctant Years
As on a dawn-illumined mountain stood,
Trampling to silence their loud hopes and fears,
Darkening each other with their multitude,—
And cried aloud "Liberty!" Indignation
Answered Pity from her cave;
Death grew pale within the grave,
And Desolation howled to the destroyer "Save!"
When, like heaven's sun girt by the exhalation
Of its own glorious light, thou didst arise,
Chasing thy foes from nation unto nation
Like shadows: as if day had cloven the skies
At dreaming midnight o'er the western wave,
Men started, staggering with a glad surprise,
Under the lightnings of thine unfamiliar eyes.

XII.

"Thou heaven of earth! what spells could pall thee then
In ominous eclipse? A thousand years
Bred from the slime of deep Oppression's den
Dyed all thy liquid light with blood and tears,
Till thy sweet stars could weep the stain away.
How, like Bacchanals of blood,
Round France, the ghastly vintage, stood
Destruction's sceptred slaves, and Folly's mitred brood!
When one, like them, but mightier far than they,
The Anarch of thine own bewildered powers,
Rose: armies mingled in obscure array,
Like clouds with clouds darkening the sacred bowers
Of serene heaven. He, by the past pursued,
Rests with those dead but unforgotten hours
Whose ghosts scare victor kings in their ancestral towers.

XIII.

"England yet sleeps: was she not called of old?
Spain calls her now,—as with its thrilling thunder
Vesuvius wakens Ætna, and the cold
Snow-crags by its reply are cloven in sunder:
O'er the lit waves every Æolian isle
From Pithecusa to Pelorus
Howls and leaps and glares in chorus:
They cry, 'Be dim, ye lamps of heaven suspended o'er us!'
Her chains are threads of gold,—she need but smile,

And they dissolve; but Spain's were links of steel,
Till bit to dust by virtue's keenest file.
Twins of a single destiny! appeal
To the eternal years enthroned before us
In the dim West! Impress us from a seal,
All ye have thought and done! Time cannot dare conceal.

XIV.

"Tomb of Arminius! render up thy dead,—
Till, like a standard from a watch-tower's staff,
His soul may stream over the tyrant's head!
Thy victory shall be his epitaph!
Wild Bacchanal of truth's mysterious wine,
King-deluded Germany,
His dead spirit lives in thee!
Why do we fear or hope? Thou art already free!—
And thou, lost paradise of this divine
And glorious world! thou flowery wilderness!
Thou island of eternity! thou shrine
Where Desolation, clothed with loveliness,
Worships the thing thou wert! O Italy,
Gather thy blood into thy heart; repress
The beasts who make their dens thy sacred palaces!

XV.

"Oh that the free would stamp the impious name
Of 'King' into the dust; or write it *there*,
So that this blot upon the page of fame
Were as a serpent's path which the light air
Erases, and the flat sands close behind!
Ye the oracle have heard:
Lift the victory-flashing sword,
And cut the snaky knots of this foul gordian word,
Which, weak itself as stubble, yet can bind
Into a mass irrefragably firm
The axes and the rods which awe mankind.
The sound has poison in it; 'tis the sperm
Of what makes life foul, cankerous, and abhorred.
Disdain not Thou, at thine appointed term,
To set thine armèd heel on this reluctant worm.

XVI.

"Oh that the wise from their bright minds would kindle
Such lamps within the dome of this dim world

That the pale name of Priest might shrink and dwindle
Into the hell from which it first was hurled,
A scoff of impious pride from fiends impure!
Till human thoughts might kneel alone,
Each before the judgment-throne
Of its own aweless soul, or of the Power unknown.
Oh that the words which make the thoughts obscure
From which they spring, as clouds of glimmering dew
From a white lake blot heaven's blue portraiture,
Were stripped of their thin masks and various hue,
And frowns and smiles and splendours not their own,
Till in the nakedness of false and true
They stand before their lord, each to receive its due!

XVII.

"He who taught man to vanquish whatsoever
Can be between the cradle and the grave
Crowned him the King of Life. Oh vain endeavour,
If on his own high will, a willing slave,
He has enthroned the oppression and the oppressor!
What if earth can clothe and feed
Amplest millions at their need,
And power in thought be as the tree within the seed,—
Or what if Art, an ardent intercessor,
Diving on fiery wings to Nature's throne,
Checks the great Mother stooping to caress her,
And cries, 'Give me, thy child, dominion
Over all height and depth'—if Life can breed
New wants, and Wealth, from those who toil and groan,
Rend, of thy gifts and hers, a thousandfold for one?

XVIII.

"Come Thou! But lead out of the inmost cave
Of man's deep spirit—as the morning star
Beckons the Sun from the Eoan wave—
Wisdom. I hear the pennons of her car,
Self-moving, like cloud charioted by flame!
Comes she not? And come ye not,
Rulers of eternal thought,
To judge with solemn truth Life's ill-apportioned lot,—
Blind Love, and equal Justice, and the Fame
Of what has been, the Hope of what will be?
O Liberty—(if such could be thy name

Wert thou disjoined from these, or they from thee)—
If thine or theirs were treasures to be bought
By blood or tears, have not the wise and free
Wept tears, and blood like tears?"—The solemn harmony

XIX.

Paused, and the Spirit of that mighty singing
To its abyss was suddenly withdrawn.
Then, as a wild swan, when sublimely winging
Its path athwart the thunder-smoke of dawn,
Sinks headlong through the aërial golden light
On the heavy-sounding plain,
When the bolt has pierced its brain;
As summer clouds dissolve unburthened of their rain;
As a far taper fades with fading night;
As a brief insect dies with dying day;
My song, its pinions disarrayed of might,
Drooped. O'er it closed the echoes far away
Of the great voice which did its flight sustain,—
As waves which lately paved his watery way
Hiss round a drowner's head in their tempestuous play.

ARETHUSA.

I.

Arethusa arose
From her couch of snows
In the Acroceraunian mountains,—
From cloud and from crag,
With many a jag,
Shepherding her bright fountains.
She leapt down the rocks,
With her rainbow locks
Streaming among the streams;
Her steps paved with green
The downward ravine
Which slopes to the western gleams:
And gliding and springing
She went, ever singing
In murmurs as soft as sleep.
The Earth seemed to love her,
And Heaven smiled above her,
As she lingered towards the deep.

II.

Then Alpheus bold,
On his glacier cold,
With his trident the mountains strook;
And opened a chasm
In the rocks:—with the spasm
All Erymanthus shook.
And the black south wind
It concealed behind
The urns of the silent snow,
And earthquake and thunder
Did rend in sunder
The bars of the springs below.
The beard and the hair
Of the River-god were
Seen through the torrent's sweep,
As he followed the light
Of the fleet Nymph's flight
To the brink of the Dorian deep.

III.

"Oh save me! Oh guide me!
And bid the deep hide me!
For he grasps me now by the hair!"
The loud Ocean heard,
To its blue depth stirred,
And divided at her prayer;
And under the water
The Earth's white daughter
Fled like a sunny beam;
Behind her descended
Her billows, unblended
With the brackish Dorian stream.
Like a gloomy stain
On the emerald main,
Alpheus rushed behind,—
As an eagle pursuing
A dove to its ruin
Down the streams of the cloudy wind.

IV.

Under the bowers
Where the Ocean Powers

Sit on their pearlèd thrones;
Through the coral woods
Of the weltering floods;
Over heaps of unvalued stones;
Through the dim beams
Which amid the streams
Weave a network of coloured light;
And under the caves
Where the shadowy waves
Are as green as the forest's night:
Outspeeding the shark,
And the sword-fish dark,—
Under the ocean foam,
And up through the rifts
Of the mountain clifts,—
They passed to their Dorian home.

V.

And now from their fountains
In Enna's mountains,
Down one vale where the morning basks,
Like friends once parted
Grown single-hearted,
They ply their watery tasks.
At sunrise they leap
From their cradles steep
In the cave of the shelving hill;
At noontide they flow
Through the woods below,
And the meadows of asphodel;
And at night they sleep
In the rocking deep
Beneath the Ortygian shore,—
Like spirits that lie
In the azure sky,
When they love but live no more.

Pisa.

HYMN OF APOLLO.

I.

THE sleepless Hours who watch me as I lie,
Curtained with star-inwoven tapestries
From the broad moonlight of the sky,
Fanning the busy dreams from my dim eyes,
Waken me when their Mother, the grey Dawn,
Tells them that dreams and that the moon is gone.

II.

Then I arise, and, climbing heaven's blue dome,
I walk over the mountains and the waves,
Leaving my robe upon the ocean foam;—
My footsteps pave the clouds with fire; the caves
Are filled with my bright presence; and the air
Leaves the green Earth to my embraces bare.

III.

The sunbeams are my shafts, with which I kill
Deceit, that loves the night and fears the day;
All men who do or even imagine ill
Fly me, and from the glory of my ray
Good minds and open actions take new might,
Until diminished by the reign of Night.

IV.

I feed the clouds, the rainbows, and the flowers,
With their ethereal colours; the moon's globe,
And the pure stars in their eternal bowers,
Are cinctured with my power as with a robe;
Whatever lamps on earth or heaven may shine
Are portions of one power, which is mine.

V.

I stand at noon upon the peak of heaven;
Then with unwilling steps I wander down
Into the clouds of the Atlantic even;
For grief that I depart they weep and frown.
What look is more delightful than the smile
With which I soothe them from the western isle?

VI.

I am the eye with which the universe
Beholds itself, and knows itself divine;
All harmony of instrument or verse,
All prophecy, all medicine, are mine,
All light of art or nature;—to my song
Victory and praise in its own right belong.

HYMN OF PAN.

From the forests and highlands
We come, we come;
From the river-girt islands,
Where loud waves are dumb
Listening to my sweet pipings.
The wind in the reeds and the rushes,
The bees on the bells of thyme,
The birds on the myrtle bushes,
The cicale above in the lime,
And the lizards below in the grass,
Were as silent as ever old Tmolus was,
Listening to my sweet pipings.

Liquid Peneus was flowing,
And all dark Tempe lay
In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing
The light of the dying day,
Speeded by my sweet pipings.
The Sileni and Sylvans and Fauns,
And the Nymphs of the woods and waves,
To the edge of the moist river-lawns,
And the brink of the dewy caves,
And all that did then attend and follow,
Were silent with love,—as you now, Apollo,
With envy of my sweet pipings.

I sang of the dancing stars,
I sang of the dædal earth,
And of heaven, and the Giant wars,
And love, and death, and birth.
And then I changed my pipings,—

Singing how down the vale of Mænalus
I pursued a maiden, and clasped a reed:
Gods and men, we are all deluded thus;
It breaks in our bosom, and then we bleed.
All wept—as I think both ye now would,
If envy or age had not frozen your blood—
At the sorrow of my sweet pipings.

THE QUESTION.

I.

I DREAMED that, as I wandered by the way,
Bare winter suddenly was changed to Spring;
And gentle odours led my steps astray,
Mixed with a sound of waters murmuring
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling
Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,
But kissed it and then fled, as thou mightest in dream.

II.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets;
Daisies, those pearled Arcturi of the earth,
The constellated flower that never sets;
Faint oxlips; tender bluebells, at whose birth
The sod scarce heaved; and that tall flower that wets
Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears
When the low wind its playmate's voice it hears.

III.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
Green cow-bind and the moonlight-coloured may,
And cherry-blossoms, and white cups whose wine
Was the bright dew yet drained not by the Day;
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,
With its dark buds and leaves wandering astray;
And flowers, azure, black, and streaked with gold,
Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.

IV.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
There grew broad flag-flowers, purple pranked with white,

And starry river-buds among the sedge,
And floating water-lilies, broad and bright,
Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
With moonlight beams of their own watery light;
And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

V.

Methought that of these visionary flowers
I made a nosegay, bound in such a way
That the same hues which in their natural bowers
Were mingled or opposed, the like array
Kept these imprisoned children of the Hours
Within my hand;—and then, elate and gay,
I hastened to the spot whence I had come,
That I might there present it—oh! to whom?

THE SENSITIVE PLANT.—PART I.

I.

A SENSITIVE Plant in a garden grew;
And the young winds fed it with silver dew;
And it opened its fan-like leaves to the light,
And closed them beneath the kisses of Night.

II.

And the Spring arose on the garden fair,
Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere;
And each flower and herb on earth's dark breast
Rose from the dreams of its wintry rest.

III.

But none ever trembled and panted with bliss
In the garden, the field, or the wilderness,
Like a doe in the noontide with love's sweet want,
As the companionless Sensitive Plant.

IV.

The snowdrop, and then the violet,
Arose from the ground with warm rain wet;
And their breath was mixed with fresh odour sent
From the turf, like the voice and the instrument.

V.

Then the pied wind-flowers and the tulip tall,
And narcissi, the fairest among them all,
Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's recess
Till they die of their own dear loveliness;

VI.

And the Naiad-like lily of the vale,
Whom youth makes so fair, and passion so pale,
That the light of its tremulous bells is seen
Through their pavilions of tender green;

VII.

And the hyacinth, purple, and white, and blue,
Which flung from its bells a sweet peel anew
Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,
It was felt like an odour within the sense;

VIII.

And the rose, like a nymph to the bath addressed
Which unveiled the depth of her glowing breast,
Till, fold after fold, to the fainting air
The soul of her beauty and love lay bare;

IX.

And the wand-like lily, which lifted up,
As a Mænad, its moonlight-coloured cup,
Till the fiery star which is its eye
Gazed through clear dew on the tender sky;

X.

And the jessamine faint, and the sweet tuberose—
The sweetest flower for scent that blows—
And all rare blossoms from every clime,
Grew in that garden in perfect prime.

XI.

And on the stream whose inconstant bosom
Was pranked under boughs of embowering blossom,
With golden and green light slanting through
Their heaven of many a tangled hue,

XII.

Broad water-lilies lay tremulously,
And starry river-buds glimmered by;
And around them the soft stream did glide and dance
With a motion of sweet sound and radiance.

XIII.

And the sinuous paths of lawn and of moss
Which led through the garden along and across,
Some open at once to the sun and the breeze,
Some lost among bowers of blossoming trees,

XIV.

Were all paved with daisies and delicate bells
As fair as the fabulous asphodels,
And flowerets which, drooping as day drooped too,
Fell into pavilions, white, purple, and blue,
To roof the glow-worm from the evening dew.

XV.

And from this undefiled paradise
The flowers (as an infant's awakening eyes
Smile on its mother, whose singing sweet
Can first lull and at last must awaken it),

XVI.

When heaven's blithe winds had unfolded them
As mine-lamps enkindle a hidden gem,
Shone smiling to heaven, and every one
Shared joy in the light of the gentle sun;—

XVII.

For each one was interpenetrated
With the light and the odour its neighbour shed,
Like young lovers whom youth and love make dear,
Wrapped and filled by their mutual atmosphere.

XVIII.

But the Sensitive Plant, which could give small fruit
Of the love which it felt from the leaf to the root,
Received more than all; it loved more than ever,
Where none wanted but it, could belong to the giver:—

XIX.

For the Sensitive Plant has no bright flower;
Radiance and odour are not its dower;
It loves even like Love,—its deep heart is full;
It desires what it has not, the beautiful.

XX.

The light winds which from unsustaining wings
Shed the music of many murmurings;

The beams which dart from many a star
Of the flowers whose hues they bear afar;

XXI.

The plumèd insects swift and free,
Like golden boats on a sunny sea,
Laden with light and odour, which pass
Over the gleam of the living grass;

XXII.

The unseen clouds of the dew which lie
Like fire in the flowers till the sun rides high,
Then wander like spirits among the spheres,
Each cloud faint with the fragrance it bears;

XXIII.

The quivering vapours of dim noontide,
Which like a sea o'er the warm earth glide,
In which every sound and odour and beam
Move as reeds in a single stream;—

XXIV.

Each and all like ministering angels were
For the Sensitive Plant sweet joy to bear,
Whilst the lagging hours of the day went by,
Like windless clouds o'er a tender sky.

XXV.

And, when evening descended from heaven above,
And the earth was all rest, and the air was all love,
And delight, though less bright, was far more deep,
And the day's veil fell from the world of sleep,—

XXVI.

And the beasts and the birds and the insects were drowned
In an ocean of dreams without a sound,
Whose waves never mark though they ever impress
The light sand which paves it, consciousness;—

XXVII.

(Only overhead the sweet nightingale
Ever sang more sweet as the day might fail,
And snatches of its elysian chant
Were mixed with the dreams of the Sensitive Plant);—

XXVIII.

The Sensitive Plant was the earliest
Upgathered into the bosom of rest;
A sweet child weary of its delight,
The feeblest and yet the favourite,
Cradled within the embrace of Night.

PART II.

I.

THERE was a power in this sweet place,
An Eve in this Eden; a ruling Grace
Which to the flowers, did they waken or dream,
Was as God is to the starry scheme.

II.

A Lady, the wonder of her kind,
Whose form was upborne by a lovely mind,
Which, dilating, had moulded her mien and motion
Like a sea-flower unfolded beneath the ocean,

III.

Tended the garden from morn to even:
And the meteors of that sublunar heaven,
Like the lamps of the air when Night walks forth,
Laughed round her footsteps up from the earth.

IV.

She had no companion of mortal race;
But her tremulous breath and her flushing face
Told, whilst the morn kissed the sleep from her eyes,
That her dreams were less slumber than paradise:

V.

As if some bright Spirit for her sweet sake
Had deserted heaven while the stars were awake,
As if yet around her he lingering were,
Though the veil of daylight concealed him from her.

VI.

Her step seemed to pity the grass it pressed:
You might hear, by the heaving of her breast,
That the coming and going of the wind
Brought pleasure there, and left passion behind.

VII.

And, wherever her airy footstep trod,
Her trailing hair from the grassy sod
Erased its light vestige with shadowy sweep,
Like a sunny storm o'er the dark-green deep.

VIII.

I doubt not the flowers of that garden sweet
Rejoiced in the sound of her gentle feet;
I doubt not they felt the spirit that came
From her glowing fingers through all their frame.

IX.

She sprinkled bright water from the stream
On those that were faint with the sunny beam;
And out of the cups of the heavy flowers
She emptied the rain of the thunder-showers.

X.

She lifted their heads with her tender hands,
And sustained them with rods and osier bands;
If the flowers had been her own infants, she
Could never have nursed them more tenderly.

XI.

And all killing insects and gnawing worms,
And things of obscene and unlovely forms,
She bore in a basket of Indian woof
Into the rough woods far aloof;—

XII.

In a basket of grasses and wild flowers full,
The freshest her gentle hands could pull
For the poor banished insects, whose intent,
Although they did ill, was innocent.

XIII.

But the bee, and the beamlike ephemeris
Whose path is the lightning's, and soft moths that kiss
The sweet lips of the flowers, and harm not, did she
Make her attendant angels be.

XIV.

And many an antenatal tomb
Where butterflies dream of the life to come
She left clinging round the smooth and dark
Edge of the odorous cedar bark.

XV.

This fairest Creature from earliest Spring
Thus moved through the garden ministering
All the sweet season of summer tide:
And, ere the first leaf looked brown, she died.

PART III.

I.

THREE days the flowers of the garden fair
Like stars when the moon is awakened were,
Or the waves of Baiæ ere luminous
She floats up through the smoke of Vesuvius.

II.

And on the fourth the Sensitive Plant
Felt the sound of the funeral chant;
And the steps of the bearers, heavy and slow;
And the sobs of the mourners, deep and low;

III.

The weary sound and the heavy breath;
And the silent motions of passing death;
And the smell, cold, oppressive and dank,
Sent through the pores of the coffin plank.

IV.

The dark grass, and the flowers among the grass,
Were bright with tears as the crowd did pass;
From their sighs the Wind caught a mournful tone,
And sate in the pines, and gave groan for groan.

V.

The garden, once fair, became cold and foul,
Like the corpse of her who had been its soul:
Which at first was lovely as if in sleep,
Then slowly changed, till it grew a heap
To make men tremble who never weep.

VI.

Swift summer into the autumn flowed;
And frost in the mist of the morning rode,
Though the noonday sun looked clear and bright,
Mocking the spoil of the secret night.

VII.

The rose-leaves, like flakes of crimson snow,
Paved the turf and the moss below:
The lilies were drooping and white and wan,
Like the head and the skin of a dying man;

VIII.

And Indian plants, of scent and hue
The sweetest that ever were fed on dew,
Leaf after leaf, day after day,
Were massed into the common clay.

IX.

And the leaves, brown, yellow, and grey, and red,
And white with the whiteness of what is dead,
Like troops of ghosts on the dry wind passed:
Their whistling noise made the birds aghast.

X.

And the gusty winds waked the winged seeds
Out of their birthplace of ugly weeds,
Till they clung round many a sweet flower's stem,
Which rotted into the earth with them.

XI.

The water-blooms under the rivulet
Fell from the stalks on which they were set;
And the eddies drove them here and there,
As the winds did those of the upper air.

XII.

Then the rain came down; and the broken stalks
Were bent and tangled across the walks;
And the leafless network of parasite bowers
Massed into ruin, and all sweet flowers.

XIII.

Between the time of the wind and the snow,
All loathliest weeds began to grow,
Whose coarse leaves were splashed with many a speck,
Like the water-snake's belly and the toad's back;

XIV.

And thistles, and nettles, and darnels rank,
And the dock, and henbane; and hemlock dank
Stretched out its long and hollow shank,
And stifled the air till the dead wind stank.

XV.

And plants at whose names the verse feels loth
Filled the place with a monstrous undergrowth,
Prickly and pulpous and blistering and blue,
Livid, and starred with a lurid dew.

XVI.

And agarics and fungi, with mildew and mould,
Started like mist from the wet ground cold;
Pale, fleshy, as if the decaying dead
With a spirit of growth had been animated.

XVII.

Their moss rotted off them flake by flake,
Till the thick stalk stuck like a murderer's stake,
Where rags of loose flesh yet tremble on high,
Infecting the winds that wander by.

XVIII.

Spawn, weeds, and filth, a leprous scum,
Made the running rivulet thick and dumb,
And at its outlet flags huge as stakes
Dammed it up with roots knotted like water-snakes.

XIX.

And hour by hour, when the air was still,
The vapours arose which have strength to kill:
At morn they were seen, at noon they were felt,
At night they were darkness no star could melt.

XX.

And unctuous meteors from spray to spray
Crept and flitted in broad noonday
Unseen; every branch on which they alit
By a venomous blight was burned and bit.

XXI.

The Sensitive Plant, like one forbid,
Wept, and the tears within each lid
Of its folded leaves which together grew,
Were changed to a blight of frozen glue.

XXII.

For the leaves soon fell, and the branches soon
By the heavy axe of the blast were hewn;
The sap shrank to the root through every pore,
As blood to a heart that will beat no more.

XXIII.

For Winter came: the wind was his whip;
One choppy finger was on his lip:
He had torn the cataracts from the hills,
And they clanked at his girdle like manacles.

XXIV.

His breath was a chain which without a sound
The earth and the air and the water bound;
He came, fiercely driven in his chariot-throne
By the tenfold blasts of the Arctic zone.

XXV.

Then the weeds, which were forms of living death,
Fled from the frost to the earth beneath:
Their decay and sudden flight from frost
Was but like the vanishing of a ghost.

XXVI.

And under the roots of the Sensitive Plant
The moles and the dormice died for want:
The birds dropped stiff from the frozen air,
And were caught in the branches naked and bare.

XXVII.

First there came down a thawing rain,
And its dull drops froze on the boughs again;
Then there steamed up a freezing dew
Which to the drops of the thaw-rain grew;

XXVIII.

And a northern Whirlwind, wandering about
Like a wolf that had smelt a dead child out,
Shook the boughs, thus laden and heavy and stiff,
And snapped them off with his rigid griff.

XXIX.

When Winter had gone, and Spring came back,
The Sensitive Plant was a leafless wreck;
But the mandrakes and toadstools and docks and darnels
Rose like the dead from their ruined charnels.

CONCLUSION.

I.

WHETHER the Sensitive Plant, or that
Which within its boughs like a spirit sat

Ere its outward form had known decay,
Now felt this change, I cannot say.

II.

Whether that Lady's gentle mind,
No longer with the form combined
Which scattered love as stars do light,
Found sadness where it left delight,

III.

I dare not guess. But, in this life
Of error, ignorance, and strife,
Where nothing is but all things seem,
And we the shadows of the dream,

IV.

It is a modest creed, and yet
Pleasant if one considers it,
To own that death itself must be,
Like all the rest, a mockery.

V.

That garden sweet, that Lady fair,
And all sweet shapes and odours there,
In truth have never passed away:
'Tis we, 'tis ours, are changed; not they.

VI.

For love, and beauty, and delight,
There is no death nor change; their might
Exceeds our organs, which endure
No light, being themselves obscure.

THE CLOUD.

I.

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting flowers
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their Mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.

I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under;
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

II.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the Blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skiey bowers
Lightning my pilot sits;
In a cavern under is fettered the Thunder,
It struggles and howls at fits.
Over earth and ocean with gentle motion
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the Genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea;
Over the rills and the crags and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream under mountain or stream
The Spirit he loves remains;
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile,
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

III.

The sanguine Sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead:
As on the jag of a mountain crag
Which an earthquake rocks and swings
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And, when Sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,
Its ardours of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of heaven above,
With wings folded I rest on mine airy nest,
As still as a brooding dove.

IV.

That orbèd maiden with white fire laden
Whom mortals call the Moon

Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor
By the midnight breezes strewn;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,
The Stars peep behind her and peer.
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,—
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

V.

I bind the Sun's throne with a burning zone,
And the Moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanoes are dim, and the Stars reel and swim,
When the Whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof;
The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch through which I march,
With hurricane, fire, and snow,
When the Powers of the air are chained to my chair,
Is the million-coloured bow;
The Sphere-fire above its soft colours wove,
While the moist Earth was laughing below.

VI.

I am the daughter of Earth and Water,
And the nursling of the Sky:
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain, when with never a stain
The pavilion of heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams
Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,—
And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
I arise, and unbuild it again.

TO A SKYLARK.

I.

HAIL to thee, blithe spirit—
Bird thou never wert—
That from heaven or near it
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

II.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest:
Like a cloud of fire,
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

III.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an embodied joy whose race is just begun.

IV.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight,
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight—

V.

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel, that it is there.

VI.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

VII.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody:—

VIII.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

IX.

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love which overflows her bower:

X.

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass which screen it from the view:

XI.

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged thieves.

XII.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,—
All that ever was,
Joyous and clear and fresh,—thy music doth surpass.

XIII.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:

I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

XIV.

Chorus hymeneal
Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine, would be all
But an empty vaunt—
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

XV.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

XVI.

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest, but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

XVII.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

XVIII.

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

XIX.

Yet, if we could scorn
Hate and pride and fear,
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy[illegible] ever should come near.

XX.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

XXI.

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know;
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then as I am listening now.

TO ——.

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden;
Thou needest not fear mine,—
My spirit is too deeply laden
Ever to burthen thine.

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion;
Thou needest not fear mine,—
Innocent is the heart's devotion
With which I worship thine.

THE TWO SPIRITS.

AN ALLEGORY.

FIRST SPIRIT.

O THOU who plumed with strong desire
Wouldst float above the earth, beware!
A shadow tracks thy flight of fire—
Night is coming!
Bright are the regions of the air,
And among the winds and beams
It were delight to wander there—
Night is coming!

SECOND SPIRIT.

The deathless stars are bright above:
If I would cross the shade of night,

Within my heart is the lamp of love,
And that is day;
And the moon will shine with gentle light
On my golden plumes where'er they move;
The meteors will linger round my flight,
And make night day.

FIRST SPIRIT.

But if the whirlwinds of darkness waken
Hail and lightning and stormy rain?
See, the bounds of the air are shaken—
Night is coming!
The red swift clouds of the hurricane
Yon declining sun have overtaken,
The clash of the hail sweeps over the plain—
Night is coming!

SECOND SPIRIT.

I see the light, and I hear the sound.
I'll sail on the flood of the tempest dark,
With the calm within and the light around
Which makes night day:
And thou, when the gloom is deep and stark,
Look from thy dull earth, slumber-bound;
My moonlike flight thou then mayst mark
On high, far away.

Some say there is a precipice
Where one vast pine is frozen to ruin
O'er piles of snow and chasms of ice
'Mid Alpine mountains;
And that the languid storm, pursuing
That wingèd shape, for ever flies
Round those hoar branches, aye renewing
Its aëry fountains.

Some say, when nights are dry and clear,
And the death-dews sleep on the morass,
Sweet whispers are heard by the traveller,
Which make night day:
And a silver shape like his early love doth pass,
Upborne by her wild and glittering hair;
And, when he awakes on the fragrant grass,
He finds night day.

SONG OF PROSERPINE,

WHILST GATHERING FLOWERS ON THE PLAIN OF ENNA.

SACRED Goddess, Mother Earth,
Thou from whose immortal bosom
Gods and men and beasts have birth,
Leaf and blade, and bud and blossom,
Breathe thine influence most divine
On thine own child, Proserpine.

If with mists of evening dew
Thou dost nourish these young flowers
Till they grow in scent and hue
Fairest children of the Hours,
Breathe thine influence most divine
On thine own child, Proserpine.

LETTER TO MARIA GISBORNE.

LEGHORN, *July* 1, 1820.

THE spider spreads her webs, whether she be
In poet's tower, cellar, or barn, or tree;
The silkworm in the dark-green mulberry leaves
His winding-sheet and cradle ever weaves:
So I, a thing whom moralists call worm,
Sit spinning still round this decaying form,
From the fine threads of rare and subtle thought—
No net of words in garish colours wrought
To catch the idle buzzers of the day—
But a soft cell where, when that fades away,
Memory may clothe in wings my living name,
And feed it with the asphodels of fame
Which in those hearts which must remember me
Grow, making love an immortality.

Whoever should behold me now, I wist,
Would think I were a mighty mechanist,
Bent with sublime Archimedean art
To breathe a soul into the iron heart

Of some machine portentous, or strange gin,
Which by the force of figured spells might win
Its way over the sea, and sport therein ;—
For round the walls are hung dread engines, such
As Vulcan never wrought for Jove to clutch
Ixion or the Titan ; or the quick
Wit of that man of God, Saint Dominic,
To convince atheist, Turk, or heretic;
Or those in philosophic councils met
Who thought to pay some interest for the debt
They owed to Jesus Christ for their salvation
By giving a faint foretaste of damnation
To Shakspeare, Sydney, Spenser, and the rest
Who made our land an island of the blessed,
(When lamp-like Spain, who now relumes her fire
On Freedom's hearth, grew dim with empire),
With thumbscrews, wheels with tooth and spike and jag,
Which fishes found under the utmost crag
Of Cornwall, and the storm-encompassed isles
Where to the sky the rude sea seldom smiles
Unless in treacherous wrath, as on the morn
When the exulting elements in scorn,
Satiated with destroyed destruction, lay
Sleeping in beauty on their mangled prey,
As panthers sleep. And other strange and dread
Magical forms the brick floor overspread.
Proteus transformed to metal did not make
More figures, or more strange ; nor did he take
Such shapes of unintelligible brass,
Or heap himself in such a horrid mass
Of tin and iron not to be understood,
And forms of unimaginable wood,
To puzzle Tubal Cain and all his brood :
Great screws, and cones, and wheels, and grooved blocks,
The elements of what will stand the shocks
Of wave and wind and time.—Upon the table
More knacks and quips there be than I am able
To catalogize in this verse of mine :
A pretty bowl of wood—not full of wine,
But quicksilver; that dew which the gnomes drink
When at their subterranean toil they swink,
Pledging the demons of the earthquake, who

Reply to them in lava-cry "halloo!"
And call out to the cities o'er their head.
Roofs, towns, and shrines, the dying and the dead,
Crash through the chinks of earth: and then all quaff
Another rouse, and hold their sides and laugh.
This quicksilver no gnome has drunk: within
The walnut bowl it lies, veinèd and thin,
In colour like the wake of light that stains
The Tuscan deep when from the moist moon rains
The inmost shower of its white fire—the breeze
Is still—blue heaven smiles over the pale seas.
And in this bowl of quicksilver—for I
Yield to the impulse of an infancy
Outlasting manhood—I have made to float
A rude idealism of a paper boat,
A hollow screw with cogs: Henry will know
The thing I mean, and laugh at me. If so,
He fears not I should do more mischief.—Next
Lie bills and calculations much perplexed
With steam-boats, frigates, and machinery quaint,
Traced over them in blue and yellow paint.
Then comes a range of mathematical
Instruments, for plans nautical and statical;
A heap of rosin; a green broken glass
With ink in it; a china cup that was
(What it will never be again, I think)
A thing from which sweet lips were wont to drink
The liquor doctors rail at—and which I
Will quaff in spite of them; and, when we die,
We'll toss up who died first of drinking tea,
And cry out "heads or tails!" where'er we be.
Near that, a dusty paint-box, some old hooks,
A half-burnt match, an ivory block, three books,
Where conic sections, spherics, logarithms,
To great Laplace from Saunderson and Sims,
Lie heaped in the harmonious disarray
Of figures,—disentangle them who may.
Baron de Tott's Memoirs beside them lie,
And some odd volumes of old chemistry.
Near them a most inexplicable thing,
With lead in the middle—I 'm conjecturing
How to make Henry understand; but no!

I 'll leave, as Spenser says "with many mo,"
This secret in the pregnant womb of Time,
Too vast a matter for so weak a rhyme.

And here like some weird archimage sit I,
Plotting dark spells and devilish enginery,—
The self-impelling steam-wheels of the mind,
Which pump up oaths from clergymen, and grind
The gentle spirit of our meek Reviews
Into a powdery foam of salt abuse,
Ruffling the ocean of their self-content.
I sit, and smile,— or sigh, as is my bent,
But not for them. Libeccio rushes round
With an inconstant and an idle sound;
I heed him more than them. The thunder-smoke
Is gathering on the mountains, like a cloak
Folded athwart their shoulders broad and bare;
The ripe corn under the undulating air
Undulates like an ocean; and the vines
Are trembling wide in all their trellised lines;
The murmur of the awakening sea doth fill
The empty pauses of the blast; the hill
Looks hoary through the white electric rain;
And from the glens beyond, in sullen strain,
The interrupted thunder howls; above
One chasm of heaven smiles, like the Age of Love
On the unquiet world;—while such things are,
How could one worth your friendship heed the war
Of worms,—the shriek of the world's carrion jays,
Their censure or their wonder or their praise?

You are not here! The quaint witch Memory sees
In vacant chairs your absent images,
And points where once you sat, and now should be,
But are not.—I demand if ever we
Shall meet as then we met;—and she replies,
Veiling in awe her second-sighted eyes,
"I know the past alone: but summon home
My sister Hope—she speaks of all to come."
But I, an old diviner who know well
Every false verse of that sweet oracle,
Turned to the sad enchantress once again,
And sought a respite from my gentle pain

In acting every passage o'er and o'er
Of our communion:—How on the sea shore
We watched the ocean and the sky together,
Under the roof of blue Italian weather;
How I ran home through last year's thunder-storm,
And felt the transverse lightning linger warm
Upon my cheek; and how we often made
Treats for each other where good-will outweighed
The frugal luxury of our country cheer,
(As it well might, were it *less* firm and clear
Than ours must ever be). And how we spun
A shroud of talk to hide us from the sun
Of this familiar life, which seems to be
But is not,—or is but quaint mockery
Of all we would believe; or sadly blame
The jarring and inexplicable frame
Of this wrong world, and then anatomize
The purposes and thoughts of men whose eyes
Were closed in distant years; or widely guess
The issue of the earth's great business,
When we shall be as we no longer are
(Like babbling gossips safe, who hear the war
Of winds, and sigh, but tremble not); or how
You listened to some interrupted flow
Of visionary rhyme, in joy and pain
Struck from the inmost fountains of my brain,
With little skill perhaps; or how we sought
Those deepest wells of passion or of thought
Wrought by wise poets in the waste of years,
Staining the sacred waters with our tears,
Quenching a thirst ever to be renewed;
Or how I, wisest lady! then indued
The language of a land which now is free,
And, winged with thoughts of truth and majesty,
Flits round the tyrant's sceptre like a cloud,
And bursts the peopled prisons, and cries aloud
"My name is Legion!"—that majestic tongue
Which Calderon over the desert flung
Of ages and of nations, and which found
An echo in our hearts, and with the sound
Startled Oblivion. Thou wert then to me
As is a nurse when inarticulately

A child would talk as its grown parents do.
If living winds the rapid clouds pursue,
If hawks chase doves through the aërial way,
Huntsmen the innocent deer, and beasts their prey,
Why should not we rouse with the spirit's blast
Out of the forest of the pathless past
These recollected pleasures?

You are now
In London; that great sea whose ebb and flow
At once is deaf and loud, and on the shore
Vomits its wrecks, and still howls on for more.
Yet in its depth what treasures! You will see
Your old friend Godwin,—greater none than he;
Though fallen on evil times, yet will he stand,
Among the spirits of our age and land,
Before the dread tribunal of To-come
The foremost, whilst Rebuke cowers pale and dumb.
You will see Coleridge; he who sits obscure
In the exceeding lustre and the pure
Intense irradiation of a mind
Which, with its own internal lightning blind,
Flags wearily through darkness and despair—
A cloud-encircled meteor of the air,
A hooded eagle among blinking owls.
You will see Hunt; one of those happy souls
Which are the salt of the earth, and without whom
This world would smell like what it is—a tomb;
Who is what others seem. His room no doubt
Is still adorned by many a cast from Shout;
With graceful flowers tastefully placed about,
And coronals of bay from ribbons hung,
And brighter wreaths in neat disorder flung,
The gifts of the most learned among some dozens
Of female friends, sisters-in-law, and cousins.
And there is he with his eternal puns,
Which beat the dullest brain for smiles, like duns
Thundering for money at a poet's door;
Alas! it is no use to say "I'm poor!"—
Or oft in graver mood, when he will look
Things wiser than were ever said in book,
Except in Shakspeare's wisest tenderness.
You will see Hogg; and I cannot express

His virtues (though I know that they are great),
Because he locks, then barricades, the gate
Within which they inhabit. Of his wit
And wisdom, you'll cry out when you are bit.
He is a pearl within an oyster-shell,
One of the richest of the deep. And there
Is English Peacock, with his mountain fair,—
Turned into a Flamingo, that shy bird
That gleams i' the Indian air. Have you not heard,
When a man marries, dies, or turns Hindoo,
His best friends hear no more of him? But you
Will see him, and will like him too, I hope,
With the milk-white Snowdonian antelope
Matched with this camelopard. His fine wit
Makes such a wound the knife is lost in it;
A strain too learned for a shallow age,
Too wise for selfish bigots;—let his page,
Which charms the chosen spirits of the time
Fold itself up for a serener clime
Of years to come, and find its recompense
In that just expectation. Wit and sense,
Virtue and human knowledge, all that might
Make this dull world a business of delight,
Are all combined in Horace Smith.—And these
(With some exceptions, which I need not teaze
Your patience by descanting on) are all
You and I know in London.

I recall
My thoughts, and bid you look upon the night.
As water does a sponge, so the moonlight
Fills the void, hollow, universal air.
What see you?—Unpavilioned heaven is fair;
Whether the Moon, into her chamber gone,
Leaves midnight to the golden stars, or wan
Climbs with diminished beams the azure steep;
Or whether clouds sail o'er the inverse deep,
Piloted by the many-wandering blast,
And the rare stars rush through them, dim and fast.
All this is beautiful in every land.
But what see *you* beside? A shabby stand
Of hackney-coaches—a brick house or wall

Fencing some lonely court, white with the scrawl
Of our unhappy politics;—or worse—
A wretched woman reeling by, whose curse,
Mixed with the watchman's, partner of her trade,
You must accept in place of serenade,
Or yellow-haired Pollonia murmuring
To Henry some unutterable thing.

I see a chaos of green leaves and fruit
Built round dark caverns, even to the root
Of the living stems who feed them, in whose bowers
There sleep in their dark dew the folded flowers.
Beyond, the surface of the unsickled corn
Trembles not in the slumbering air; and, borne
In circles quaint and ever-changing dance,
Like winged stars the fireflies flash and glance,
Pale in the open moonshine, but each one
Under the dark trees seems a little sun,
A meteor tamed, a fixed star gone astray
From the silver regions of the milky way.
Afar the contadino's song is heard,
Rude but made sweet by distance, and a bird
Which cannot be a nightingale, and yet
I know none else that sings so sweet as it
At this late hour:—and then all is still.
Now, Italy or London, which you will!

Next winter you must pass with me. I'll have
My house by that time turned into a grave
Of dead despondence and low-thoughted care,
And all the dreams which our tormentors are.
Oh, that Hunt, ———, and ———, were there,
With everything belonging to them fair!
We will have books, Spanish, Italian, Greek;
And ask one week to make another week
As like his father as I'm unlike mine.
Though we eat little flesh and drink no wine,
Yet let's be merry. We'll have tea and toast;
Custards for supper; and an endless host
Of syllabubs and jellies and mince-pies,
And other such lady-like luxuries,—
Feasting on which we will philosophize.
And we'll have fires out of the Grand-Duke's wood,

To thaw the six weeks' winter in our blood.
And then we'll talk;—what shall we talk about?
Oh! there are themes enough for many a bout
Of thought-entangled descant! As to nerves—
With cones and parallelograms and curves
I've sworn to strangle them if once they dare
To bother me, when you are with me there;
And they shall never more sip laudanum
From Helicon or Himeros. Well, come,
And in despite of * * * and of the devil
We'll make our friendly philosophic revel
Outlast the leafless time; till buds and flowers
Warn the obscure inevitable hours
Sweet meeting by sad parting to renew:—
"To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new."

ODE TO NAPLES.

EPODE I. α.

I STOOD within the city disinterred;
And heard the autumnal leaves like light footfalls
Of spirits passing through the streets; and heard
The Mountain's slumberous voice at intervals
Thrill through those roofless halls.
The oracular thunder penetrating shook
The listening soul in my suspended blood;
I felt that Earth out of her deep heart spoke—
I felt, but heard not. Through white columns glowed
The isle-sustaining ocean-flood,
A plane of light between two heavens of azure.
Around me gleamed many a bright sepulchre,
Of whose pure beauty Time, as if his pleasure
Were to spare Death, had never made erasure;
But every living lineament was clear
As in the sculptor's thought, and there
The wreaths of stony myrtle, ivy, and pine,
Like winter leaves o'ergrown by moulded snow,
Seemed only not to move and grow
Because the crystal silence of the air
Weighed on their life, even as the Power divine
Which then lulled all things brooded upon mine.

EPODE II. *β.*

Then gentle winds arose,
With many a mingled close
Of wild Æolian sound and mountain odour keen.
And where the Baian ocean
Welters, with air-like motion,
Within, above, around its bowers of starry green,
Moving the sea-flowers in those purple caves,
Even as the ever stormless atmosphere
Floats o'er the elysian realm,
It bore me, (like an angel, o'er the waves
Of sunlight, whose swift pinnace of dewy air
No storm can overwhelm).
I sailed where ever flows
Under the calm serene
A spirit of deep emotion
From the unknown graves
Of the dead kings of melody.
Shadowy Aornos darkened o'er the helm
The horizontal ether; heaven stripped bare
Its depths over Elysium, where the prow
Made the invisible water white as snow;
From that Typhæan mount, Inarime,
There streamed a sunlit vapour, like the standard
Of some etherial host;
Whilst from all the coast,
Louder and louder, gathering round, there wandered
Over the oracular woods and divine sea
Prophesyings which grew articulate—
They seize me—I must speak them;—be they fate!

STROPHE I. *α.*

NAPLES! thou heart of men which ever pantest
Naked beneath the lidless eye of heaven!
Elysian City, which to calm enchantest
The mutinous air and sea,—they round thee, even
As Sleep round Love, are driven!
Metropolis of a ruined paradise
Long lost, late won, and yet but half regained!
Bright altar of the bloodless sacrifice
Which armèd Victory offers up unstained
To Love the flower-enchained!

Thou which wert once, and then didst cease to be,
Now art, and henceforth ever shalt be, free,
If Hope and Truth and Justice can avail,—
Hail, hail, all hail!

STROPHE II. β.

Thou youngest giant birth
Which from the groaning earth
Leap'st, clothed in armour of impenetrable scale!
Last of the intercessors
Who 'gainst the crowned transgressors
Pleadest before God's love! arrayed in wisdom's mail,
Wave thy lightning lance in mirth;
Nor let thy high heart fail,
Though from their hundred gates the leagued oppressors
With hurried legions move! Hail, hail, all hail!

ANTISTROPHE I. α.

What though Cimmerian Anarchs dare blaspheme
Freedom and thee? Thy shield is as a mirror
To make their blind slaves see, and with fierce gleam
To turn his hungry sword upon the wearer;
A new Actæon's error
Shall theirs have been—devoured by their own hounds!
Be thou like the imperial basilisk,
Killing thy foe with unapparent wounds!
Gaze on Oppression, till, at that dread risk
Aghast, she pass from the earth's disk;
Fear not, but gaze—for freemen mightier grow,
And slaves more feeble, gazing on their foe.
If Hope and Truth and Justice may avail,
Thou shalt be great.—All hail!

ANTISTROPHE II. β.

From Freedom's form divine,
From Nature's inmost shrine,
Strip every impious gawd, rend error veil by veil:
O'er Ruin desolate,
O'er Falsehood's fallen state,
Sit thou sublime, unawed; be the Destroyer pale!
And equal laws be thine,
And winged words let sail,
Freighted with truth even from the throne of God!
That wealth, surviving fate, be thine.—All hail!

STROPHE III. γ.

Didst thou not start to hear Spain's thrilling pæan
From land to land re-echoed solemnly,
Till silence became music? From the Ægean
To the cold Alps, eternal Italy
Starts to hear thine! The sea
Which paves the desert streets of Venice laughs
In light and music; widowed Genoa wan,
By moonlight, spells ancestral epitaphs,
Murmuring "Where is Doria?" fair Milan,
Within whose veins long ran
The viper's palsying venom, lifts her heel
To bruise his head. The signal and the seal
(If Hope and Truth and Justice can avail)
Art thou of all these hopes.—Oh hail!

STROPHE IV. δ.

Florence, beneath the sun,
Of cities fairest one,
Blushes within her bower for Freedom's expectation:
From eyes of quenchless hope
Rome tears the priestly cope,
As ruling once by power, so now by admiration,—
An athlete stripped to run
From a remoter station
For the high prize lost on Philippi's shore:—
As then Hope, Truth, and Justice, did avail,
So now may Fraud and Wrong! Oh hail!

EPODE I. α.

Hear ye the march as of the Earth-born Forms
Arrayed against the ever-living Gods?
The crash and darkness of a thousand storms
Bursting their inaccessible abodes
Of crags and thunder-clouds?
See ye the banners blazoned to the day,
Inwrought with emblems of barbaric pride?
Dissonant threats kill silence far away;
The serene heaven which wraps our Eden wide
With iron light is dyed.
The Anarchs of the North lead forth their legions,
Like chaos o'er creation, uncreating;
An hundred tribes nourished on strange religions

And lawless slaveries. Down the aërial regions
Of the white Alps, desolating,
Famished wolves that bide no waiting,
Blotting the glowing footsteps of old glory,
Trampling our columned cities into dust,
Their dull and savage lust
On Beauty's corse to sickness satiating—
They come! The fields they tread look black and hoary
With fire—from their red feet the streams run gory!

EPODE II. β.

Great Spirit, deepest Love,
Which rulest and dost move
All things which live and are within the Italian shore;
Who spreadest heaven around it,
Whose woods, rocks, waves, surround it;
Who sittest in thy star, o'er ocean's western floor!—
Spirit of Beauty, at whose soft command
The sunbeams and the showers distil its foison
From the earth's bosom chill!—
Oh bid those beams be each a blinding brand
Of lightning! bid those showers be dews of poison!
Bid the earth's plenty kill!
Bid thy bright heaven above,
Whilst light and darkness bound it,
Be their tomb who planned
To make it ours and thine!
Or with thine harmonizing ardours fill
And raise thy sons, as o'er the prone horizon
Thy lamp feeds every twilight wave with fire!
Be man's high hope and unextinct desire
The instrument to work thy will divine!
Then clouds from sunbeams, antelopes from leopards,
And frowns and fears from thee,
Would not more swiftly flee
Thy Celtic wolves from the Ausonian shepherds.—
Whatever, Spirit, from thy starry shrine
Thou yieldest or withholdest, oh let be
This City of thy worship ever free!

25 *August* 1820.

SUMMER AND WINTER.

It was a bright and cheerful afternoon,
Towards the end of the sunny month of June,
When the north wind congregates in crowds
The floating mountains of the silver clouds
From the horizon, and the stainless sky
Opens beyond them like eternity.
All things rejoiced beneath the sun,—the weeds,
The river, and the cornfields, and the reeds,
The willow leaves that glanced in the light breeze,
And the firm foliage of the larger trees.

It was a Winter such as when birds die
In the deep forests; and the fishes lie
Stiffened in the translucent ice, which makes
Even the mud and slime of the warm lakes
A wrinkled clod as hard as brick; and when,
Among their children, comfortable men
Gather about great fires, and yet feel cold:
Alas then for the homeless beggar old!

LINES TO A REVIEWER.

Alas! good friend, what profit can you see
In hating such a hateless thing as me?
There is no sport in hate, where all the rage
Is on one side. In vain would you assuage
Your frowns upon an unresisting smile,
In which not even contempt lurks, to beguile
Your heart by some faint sympathy of hate.
Oh! conquer what you cannot satiate:
For to your passion I am far more coy,
Than ever yet was coldest maid or boy
In winter noon. Of your antipathy
If I am the Narcissus, you are free
To pine into a sound with hating me.

AUTUMN.

A DIRGE.

THE warm sun is failing, the bleak wind is wailing,
The bare boughs are sighing, the pale flowers are dying,
And the Year
On the earth her death-bed, in a shroud of leaves dead,
Is lying.
Come, Months, come away,
From November to May,
In your saddest array;
Follow the bier
Of the dead cold Year,
And like dim shadows watch by her sepulchre.

The chill rain is falling, the nipped worm is crawling,
The rivers are swelling, the thunder is knelling
For the Year;
The blithe swallows are flown, and the lizards each gone
To his dwelling.
Come, Months, come away;
Put on white, black, and grey;
Let your light sisters play—
Ye, follow the bier
Of the dead cold Year,
And make her grave green with tear on tear.

LIBERTY.

I.

THE fiery mountains answer each other,
Their thunderings are echoed from zone to zone;
The tempestuous oceans awake one another,
And the ice-rocks are shaken round Winter's throne,
When the clarion of the Typhoon is blown.

II.

From a single cloud the lightning flashes,
Whilst a thousand isles are illumined around;
Earthquake is trampling one city to ashes,
An hundred are shuddering and tottering,—the sound
Is bellowing underground.

III.

But keener thy gaze than the lightning's glare,
And swifter thy step than the earthquake's tramp;
Thou deafenest the rage of the ocean; thy stare
Makes blind the volcanoes; the sun's bright lamp
To thine is a fen-fire damp.

IV.

From billow and mountain and exhalation
The sunlight is darted through vapour and blast;
From spirit to spirit, from nation to nation,
From city to hamlet, *thy* dawning is cast,—
And tyrants and slaves are like shadows of night
In the van of the morning light.

THE TOWER OF FAMINE.

AMID the desolation of a city
Which was the cradle and is now the grave
Of an extinguished people, so that Pity
Weeps o'er the shipwrecks of oblivion's wave,
There stands the Tower of Famine. It is built
Upon some prison-homes, whose dwellers rave
For bread and gold and blood: Pain linked to Guilt,
Agitates the light flame of their hours,
Until its vital oil is spent or spilt.
There stands the pile, a tower amid the towers
And sacred domes, each marble-ribbèd roof,
The brazen-gated temples, and the bowers
Of solitary wealth. The tempest-proof
Pavilions of the dark Italian air
Are by its presence dimmed—they stand aloof,
And are withdrawn—so that the world is bare:—
As if a spectre, wrapped in shapeless terror,
Amid a company of ladies fair
Should glide and glow, till it became a mirror
Of all their beauty,—and their hair and hue,
The life of their sweet eyes with all its error,
Should be absorbed till they to marble grew.

GOOD-NIGHT.

"GOOD-NIGHT?" No, love! the night is ill
  Which severs those it should unite;
Let us remain together still,—
    That it will be *good* night.

How were the night without thee good,
  Though thy sweet wishes wing its flight?
Be it not said, thought, understood,—
    Then it will be *good* night.

The hearts that on each other beat
  From evening close to morning light
Have nights as good as they are sweet,
    But never *say* "good-night."

TIME LONG PAST.

LIKE the ghost of a dear friend dead
    Is time long past.
A tone which is now forever fled,
A hope which is now forever past,
A love so sweet it could not last,
    Was time long past.

There were sweet dreams in the night
    Of time long past:
And, was it sadness or delight,
Each day a shadow onward cast
Which made us wish it yet might last—
    That time long past.

There is regret, almost remorse,
    For time long past.
'Tis like a child's belovèd corse
A father watches, till at last
Beauty is like remembrance cast
    From time long past.

SONNET.

YE hasten to the dead: what seek ye there,
Ye restless thoughts and busy purposes
Of the idle brain, which the world's livery wear?
O thou quick heart, which pantest to possess
All that anticipation feigneth fair—
Thou vainly curious mind which wouldest guess
Whence thou didst come and whither thou mayst go,
And that which never yet was known wouldst know—
Oh! whither hasten ye, that thus ye press
With such swift feet life's green and pleasant path,
Seeking alike from happiness and woe
A refuge in the cavern of grey death?
O heart and mind and thoughts! what thing do you
Hope to inherit in the grave below?

NOTES ON THE POEMS OF 1820.

P. 215.

Like a wolf-cub from a Cadmæan Mænad.

See the Bacchæ of Euripides.

P. 224.

Hymn of Pan.

This and the former poem were written at the request of a friend, to be inserted in a drama on the subject of Midas. Apollo and Pan contended before Tmolus for the prize in music.

P. 252.

From Helicon or Himeros.

Ἵμερος, from which the river Himera was named, is, with some slight shade of difference, a synonym of Love.

P. 252.

Ode to Naples.

The author has connected many recollections of his visit to Pompeii and Baiæ with the enthusiasm excited by the intelligence of the proclamation of a constitutional government at Naples. This has given a tinge of picturesque and descriptive imagery to the introductory epodes, which depicture the scenes, and some of the majestic feelings, permanently connected with the scene of this animating event.

P. 252.

I stood within the city disinterred.

Pompeii.

P. 253.

Of the dead kings of melody.

Homer and Virgil.

P. 255.

From the Ææan.

Ææa, the Island of Circe.

P. 255.

The viper's palsying venom.

The viper was the armorial device of the Visconti, tyrants of Milan.

P. 259.

The Tower of Famine.

At Pisa there still exists the prison of Ugolino, which goes by the name of "La Torre della Fame:" in the adjoining building the galley-slaves are confined. It is situated near the Ponte al Mare on the Arno.

NOTES ON POEMS OF 1820, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

We spent the latter part of the year 1819 in Florence, where Shelley passed several hours daily in the Gallery, and made various notes on its ancient works of art. His thoughts were a good deal taken up also by the project of a steamboat, undertaken by a friend, an engineer, to ply between Leghorn and Marseilles, for which he supplied a sum of money. This was a sort of plan to delight Shelley, and he was greatly disappointed when it was thrown aside.

There was something in Florence that disagreed excessively with his health, and he suffered far more pain than usual; so much so that we left it sooner than we intended, and removed to Pisa, where we had some friends, and, above all, where we could consult the celebrated Vaccà as to the cause of Shelley's sufferings. He, like every other medical man, could only guess at that, and gave little hope of immediate relief; he enjoined him to abstain from all physicians and medicine, and to leave his complaint to nature. As he had vainly consulted medical men of the highest repute in England, he was easily persuaded to adopt this advice. Pain and ill-health followed him to the end; but the residence at Pisa agreed with him better than any other, and there in consequence we remained.

In the Spring we spent a week or two near Leghorn, borrowing the house of some friends who were absent on a journey to England.—It was on a beautiful summer evening, while wandering among the lanes whose myrtle hedges were the bowers of the fireflies, that we heard the carolling of the sky-lark which inspired one of the most beautiful of his poems. He addressed the letter to Mrs. Gisborne from this house, which was hers; he had made his study of the workshop of her son, who was an engineer. Mrs. Gisborne had been a friend of my father in her younger days. She was a lady of great accomplishments, and charming from her frank and affectionate nature. She had the most intense love of knowledge, a delicate and trembling sensibility, and preserved freshness of mind after a life of considerable adversity. As a favourite friend of my father, we had sought her with eagerness; and the most open and cordial friendship was established between us.

Our subsequent stay at the Baths of San Giuliano was shortened by an accident. At the foot of our garden ran the canal that communicated between the Serchio and the Arno. The Serchio overflowed its banks, and, breaking its bounds, this canal also overflowed; all this part of the country is below the level of its rivers, and the consequence was that it was speedily flooded. The rising waters filled the Square of the Baths, in the lower part of which our house was situated. The canal overflowed

in the garden behind; the rising waters on either side at last burst open the doors, and, meeting in the house, rose to the height of six feet. It was a picturesque sight at night to see the peasants driving the cattle from the plains below to the hills above the Baths. A fire was kept up to guide them across the ford; and the forms of the men and the animals showed in dark relief against the red glare of the flame, which was reflected again in the waters that filled the Square.

We then removed to Pisa, and took up our abode there for the winter. The extreme mildness of the climate suited Shelley, and his solitude was enlivened by an intercourse with several intimate friends. Chance cast us strangely enough on this quiet half-unpeopled town; but its very peace suited Shelley. Its river, the near mountains, and not distant sea, added to its attractions, and were the objects of many delightful excursions. We feared the south of Italy, and a hotter climate, on account of our child; our former bereavement inspiring us with terror. We seemed to take root here, and moved little afterwards; often, indeed, entertaining projects for visiting other parts of Italy, but still delaying. But for our fears on account of our child, I believe we should have wandered over the world, both being passionately fond of travelling. But human life, besides its great unalterable necessities, is ruled by a thousand lilliputian ties that shackle at the time, although it is difficult to account afterwards for their influence over our destiny.

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1821.

DIRGE FOR THE YEAR.

I.

"ORPHAN Hours, the Year is dead!
Come and sigh, come and weep!"—
"Merry Hours, smile instead,
For the Year is but asleep:
See, it smiles as it is sleeping,
Mocking your untimely weeping."—

II.

"As an earthquake rocks a corse
In its coffin in the clay,
So white Winter, that rough nurse,
Rocks the dead-cold Year to-day;
Solemn Hours! wail aloud
For your Mother in her shroud."—

III.

"As the wild air stirs and sways
The tree-swung cradle of a child,

So the breath of these rude Days
  Rocks the Year. Be calm and mild,
Trembling Hours; she will arise
With new love within her eyes.

IV.

"January grey is here,
  Like a sexton by her grave;
February bears the bier;
  March with grief doth howl and rave;
And April weeps:—but O ye Hours!
Follow with May's fairest flowers."

1 *January* 1821.

TO NIGHT.

I.

SWIFTLY walk over the western wave,
  Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave
Where, all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear
Which make thee terrible and dear,
  Swift be thy flight!

II.

Wrap thy form in a mantle grey,
  Star-inwrought,
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day;
Kiss her until she be wearied out.
Then wander o'er city and sea and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
  Come, long-sought!

III.

When I arose and saw the dawn,
  I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to her rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
  I sighed for thee.

IV.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
"Wouldst thou me?"
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noontide bee,
"Shall I nestle near thy side?
Wouldst thou me?"—And I replied,
"No, not thee."

V.

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon—
Sleep will come when thou art fled.
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, belovèd Night—
Swift be thine approaching flight,
Come soon, soon!

FROM THE ARABIC.

AN IMITATION.

My faint spirit was sitting in the light
Of thy looks, my love;
It panted for thee like the hind at noon
For the brooks, my love.
Thy barb, whose hoofs outspeed the tempest's flight,
Bore thee far from me;
My heart, for my weak feet were weary soon,
Did companion thee.

Ah! fleeter far than fleetest storm or steed,
Or the death they bear,
The heart which tender thought clothes like a dove
With the wings of care;
In the battle, in the darkness, in the need,
Shall mine cling to thee,
Nor claim one smile for all the comfort, love,
It may bring to thee.

TO EMILIA VIVIANI.

MADONNA, wherefore hast thou sent to me
Sweet-basil and mignonette,
Embleming love and health, which never yet
In the same wreath might be?
Alas, and they are wet!
Is it with thy kisses or thy tears?
For never rain or dew
Such fragrance drew
From plant or flower. The very doubt endears
My sadness ever new,
The sighs I breathe, the tears I shed, for thee.

March 1821.

TIME.

UNFATHOMABLE Sea, whose waves are years!
Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe
Are brackish with the salt of human tears!
Thou shoreless flood which in thy ebb and flow
Claspest the limits of mortality,
And, sick of prey yet howling on for more,
Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable shore!
Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
Who shall put forth on thee,
Unfathomable Sea?

LINES.

FAR, far away, O ye
Halcyons of Memory!
Seek some far calmer nest
Than this abandoned breast;
No news of your false Spring
To my heart's winter bring.
Once having gone, in vain
Ye come again.

Vultures who build your bowers
High in the future's towers!
Withered hopes on hopes are spread:
Dying joys, choked by the dead,
Will serve your beaks for prey
Many a day.

THE FUGITIVES.

I.

THE waters are flashing,
The white hail is dashing,
The lightnings are glancing,
The hoar spray is dancing:—
Away!

The whirlwind is rolling,
The thunder is tolling,
The forest is swinging,
The minster bells ringing:—
Come away!

The earth is like ocean,
Wreck-strewn and in motion;
Bird, beast, man, and worm,
Have crept out of the storm:—
Come away!

II.

"Our boat has one sail,
And the helmsman is pale.
A bold pilot, I trow,
Who should follow us now!"
Shouted he.

And she cried: "Ply the oar;
Put off gaily from shore!"—
As she spoke, bolts of death,
Mixed with hail, specked their path
O'er the sea:

And from isle, tower, and rock,
The blue beacon-cloud broke:
And, though dumb in the blast,
The red cannon flashed fast
From the lee.

III.

And "Fear'st thou?" and "Fear'st thou?"
And "Seest thou?" and "Hear'st thou?"
And "Drive we not free
O'er the terrible sea,
I and thou?"

One boat-cloak did cover
The loved and the lover;
Their blood beats one measure,
They murmur proud pleasure
Soft and low;—

While around the lashed ocean,
Like mountains in motion,
Is withdrawn and uplifted,
Sunk, shattered, and shifted
To and fro.

IV.

In the court of the fortress
Beside the pale portress,
Like a bloodhound well beaten
The bridegroom stands, eaten
By shame.

On the topmost watch-turret,
As a death-boding spirit,
Stands the grey tyrant father;
To his voice, the mad weather
Seems tame;

And, with curses as wild
As e'er clung to child,
He devotes to the blast
The best, loveliest, and last,
Of his name.

TO ——

MUSIC, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory;
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken;

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

SONG.

I.

RARELY, rarely comest thou,
Spirit of Delight!
Wherefore hast thou left me now
Many a day and night?
Many a weary night and day
'Tis since thou art fled away.

II.

How shall ever one like me
Win thee back again?
With the joyous and the free,
Thou wilt scoff at pain.
Spirit false! thou hast forgot
All but those who need thee not.

III.

As a lizard with the shade
Of a trembling leaf,
Thou with sorrow art dismayed;
Even the sighs of grief
Reproach thee that thou art not near,
And reproach thou wilt not hear.

IV.

Let me set my mournful ditty
To a merry measure;—
Thou wilt never come for pity,
Thou wilt come for pleasure;
Pity then will cut away
Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.

V.

I love all that thou lovest,
Spirit of Delight!
The fresh earth in new leaves dressed,
And the starry night,
Autumn evening, and the morn
When the golden mists are born.

VI.

I love snow, and all the forms
Of the radiant frost;
I love waves and winds and storms,—
Everything almost
Which is Nature's, and may be
Untainted by man's misery.

VII.

I love tranquil solitude,
And such society
As is quiet, wise, and good.
Between thee and me
What difference? But thou dost possess
The things I seek, not love them less.

VIII.

I love Love, though he has wings,
And like light can flee;
But above all other things,
Spirit, I love thee—
Thou art love and life! Oh come!
Make once more my heart thy home!

LINES

WRITTEN ON HEARING THE NEWS OF THE DEATH OF NAPOLEON.

I.

WHAT! alive and so bold, O Earth?
Art thou not over-bold?
What! leapest thou forth as of old
In the light of thy morning mirth,
The last of the flock of the starry fold?
Ha! leapest thou forth as of old?

Are not the limbs still when the ghost is fled,
And canst thou move, Napoleon being dead?

II.

How! is not thy quick heart cold?
What spark is alive on thy hearth?
How! is not *his* death-knell knolled,
And livest *thou* still, Mother Earth?
Thou wert warming thy fingers old
O'er the embers covered and cold
Of that most fiery spirit, when it fled—
What, Mother, dost thou laugh now he is dead?

III.

"Who has known me of old," replied Earth,
"Or who has my story told?
It is thou who art over-bold."
And the lightning of scorn laughed forth
As she sung, "To my bosom I fold
All my sons when their knell is knolled;
And so with living motion all are fed,
And the quick spring like weeds out of the dead.

IV.

"Still alive and still bold," shouted Earth,
"I grow bolder and still more bold.
The dead fill me ten thousand fold
Fuller of speed and splendour and mirth.
I was cloudy and sullen and cold,
Like a frozen chaos uprolled,
Till by the spirit of the mighty dead
My heart grew warm: I feed on whom I fed.

V.

"Ay, alive and still bold," muttered Earth.
"Napoleon's fierce spirit rolled
In terror and blood and gold,
A torrent of ruin to death from his birth.
Leave the millions who follow to mould
The metal before it be cold;
And weave into his shame, which, like the dead
Shrouds me, the hopes that from his glory fled."

MUTABILITY.

THE flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow dies:
All that we wish to stay
Tempts and then flies.
What is this world's delight?
Lightning that mocks the night,
Brief even as bright.

Virtue how frail it is!
Friendship too rare!
Love how it sells poor bliss
For proud despair!
But we, though soon they fall,
Survive their joy, and all
Which ours we call.

Whilst skies are blue and bright,
Whilst flowers are gay,
Whilst eyes that change ere night
Make glad the day,
Whilst yet the calm hours creep,
Dream thou—and from thy sleep
Then wake to weep.

SONNET.

POLITICAL GREATNESS.

NOR happiness, nor majesty, nor fame,
Nor peace, nor strength, nor skill in arms or arts,
Shepherd those herds whom tyranny makes tame:—
Verse echoes not one beating of their hearts;
History is but the shadow of their shame;
Art veils her glass, or from the pageant starts,
As to oblivion their blind millions fleet,
Staining that heaven with obscene imagery
Of their own likeness. What are numbers knit
By force or custom? Man who man would be
Must rule the empire of himself; in it
Must be supreme, establishing his throne
On vanquished will, quelling the anarchy
Of hopes and fears, being himself alone.

LINES.

IF I walk in Autumn's even
While the dead leaves pass,
If I look on Spring's soft heaven,—
Something is not there which was.
Winter's wondrous frost and snow,
Summer's clouds, where are they now?

TO-MORROW.

WHERE art thou, beloved To-morrow?
When, young and old, and strong and weak,
Rich and poor, through joy and sorrow,
Thy sweet smiles we ever seek,
In thy place—ah well-a-day!—
We find the thing we fled—To-day.

THE AZIOLA.

"Do you not hear the Aziola cry?
Methinks she must be nigh,"
Said Mary, as we sate
In dusk, ere the stars were lit or candles brought.
And I, who thought
This Aziola was some tedious woman,
Asked "Who is Aziola?" How elate
I felt to know that it was nothing human,
No mockery of myself to fear and hate!
And Mary saw my soul,
And laughed and said, "Disquiet yourself not;
'Tis nothing but a little downy owl."

Sad Aziola! many an eventide
Thy music I had heard
By wood and stream, meadow and mountain-side,
And fields and marshes wide,—
Such as nor voice nor lute nor wind nor bird
The soul ever stirred;
Unlike and far sweeter than they all.
Sad Aziola! from that moment I
Loved thee and thy sad cry.

A LAMENT.

O WORLD! O life! O time!
On whose last steps I climb,
Trembling at that where I had stood before,—
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more—oh never more!

Out of the day and night
A joy has taken flight:
Fresh Spring, and Summer, Autumn, and Winter hoar,
Move my faint heart with grief,—but with delight
No more, oh never more!

REMEMBRANCE.

SWIFTER far than summer's flight,
Swifter far than happy night,
Swifter far than youth's delight,
Art thou come and gone:
As the earth when leaves are dead,
As the night when sleep is sped,
As the heart when joy is fled,
I am left lone, alone.

The swallow summer comes again,
The owlet night resumes her reign,
But the wild swan youth is fain
To fly with thee, false as thou.
My heart to-day desires to-morrow;
Sleep itself is turned to sorrow;
Vainly would my winter borrow
Sunny leaves from any bough.

Lilies for a bridal bed,
Roses for a matron's head,
Violets for a maiden dead;
Pansies let my flowers be:
On the living grave I bear
Scatter them without a tear,
Let no friend, however dear,
Waste a hope, a fear, for me.

TO EDWARD WILLIAMS.

I.

THE serpent is shut out from paradise:
The wounded deer must seek the herb no more
In which its heart-cure lies:
The widowed dove must cease to haunt a bower
Like that from which its mate with feignèd sighs
Fled in the April hour.
I too must seldom seek again
Near happy friends a mitigated pain.

II.

Of hatred I am proud,—with scorn content;
Indifference, which once hurt me, is now grown
Itself indifferent.
But, not to speak of love, pity alone
Can break a spirit already more than bent.
The miserable one
Turns the mind's poison into food,—
Its medicine is tears,—its evil good.

III.

Therefore, if now I see you seldomer,
Dear friends, dear *friend!* know that I only fly
Your looks because they stir
Griefs that should sleep, and hopes that cannot die:
The very comfort that they minister
I scarce can bear; yet I,
So deeply is the arrow gone,
Should quickly perish if it were withdrawn.

IV.

When I return to my cold home, you ask
Why I am not as I have lately been?
You spoil me for the task
Of acting a forced part in life's dull scene,—
Of wearing on my brow the idle mask
Of author, great or mean,
In the world's carnival. I sought
Peace thus, and but in you I found it not.

V.

Full half an hour, to-day, I tried my lot
With various flowers, and every one still said,
"She loves me,—loves me not."
And if this meant a vision long since fled—
If it meant fortune, fame, or peace of thought—
If it meant—(but I dread
To speak what you may know too well)—
Still there was truth in the sad oracle.

VI.

The crane o'er seas and forests seeks her home;
No bird so wild but has its quiet nest
When it no more would roam;
The sleepless billows on the ocean's breast
Break like a bursting heart, and die in foam,
And thus at length find rest:
Doubtless there is a place of peace
Where *my* weak heart and all its throbs will cease.

VII.

I asked her yesterday if she believed
That I had resolution. One who *had*
Would ne'er have thus relieved
His heart with words,—but what his judgment bad
Would do, and leave the scorner unrelieved.—
These verses were too sad
To send to you, but that I know,
Happy yourself, you feel another's woe.

TO ——.

ONE word is too often profaned
For me to profane it;
One feeling too falsely disdained
For thee to disdain it;
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother;
And pity from thee more dear,
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love:
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above,
And the Heavens reject not:
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

TO ——.

WHEN passion's trance is overpast
If tenderness and truth could last,
Or live whilst all wild feelings keep
Some mortal slumber, dark and deep,
I should not weep, I should not weep!

It were enough to feel, to see,
Thy soft eyes gazing tenderly,
And dream the rest—and burn, and be
The secret food of fires unseen—
Couldst thou but be as thou hast been.

After the slumber of the year
The woodland violets re-appear;
All things revive in field or grove,
And sky and sea,—but two, which move
And form all others, life and love.

A BRIDAL SONG.

THE golden gates of Sleep unbar,
Where Strength and Beauty, met together,
Kindle their image, like a star
In a sea of glassy weather.
Night, with all thy stars look down—
Darkness, weep thy holiest dew!
Never smiled the inconstant moon
On a pair so true.
Let eyes not see their own delight,
Haste, swift Hour, and thy flight
Oft renew.

Fairies, sprites, and angels, keep her!
Holy stars, permit no wrong!
And return to waken the sleeper,
Dawn, ere it be long!
Oh joy! Oh fear! what will be done
In the absence of the sun? . . .
Come along!

NOTE ON POEMS OF 1821, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

My task becomes inexpressibly painful as the year draws near that which sealed our earthly fate, and each poem, and each event it records, has a real or mysterious connexion with the fatal catastrophe. I feel that I am incapable of putting on paper the history of those times. The heart of the man, abhorred of the poet, who could

"peep
And botanize upon his mother's grave,"

does not appear to me less inexplicably framed than that of one who can dissect and probe past woes, and repeat to the public ear the groans drawn from them in the throes of their agony.

The year 1821 was spent in Pisa, or at the Baths of San Giuliano. We were not, as our wont had been, alone—friends had gathered round us. Nearly all are dead, and, when Memory recurs to the past, she wanders among tombs. The genius, with all his blighting errors and mighty powers; the companion of Shelley's ocean-wanderings, and the sharer of his fate, than whom no man ever existed more gentle, generous, and fearless; and others, who found in Shelley's society, and in his great knowledge and warm sympathy, delight, instruction, and solace; have joined him beyond the grave. A few survive who have felt life a desert since he left it. What misfortune can equal death? Change can convert every other into a blessing, or heal its sting—death alone has no cure. It shakes the foundations of the earth on which we tread; it destroys its beauty; it casts down our shelter; it exposes us bare to desolation. When those we love have passed into eternity, "life is the desert and the solitude" in which we are forced to linger—but never find comfort more.

There is much in the *Adonais* which seems now more applicable to Shelley himself than to the young and gifted poet whom he mourned. The poetic view he takes of death, and the lofty scorn he displays towards his calumniators, are as a prophecy on his own destiny when received among immortal names, and the poisonous breath of critics has vanished into emptiness before the fame he inherits.

Shelley's favourite taste was boating; when living near the Thames or by the lake of Geneva, much of his life was spent on the water. On the shore of every lake or stream or sea near which he dwelt, he had a boat moored. He had latterly enjoyed this pleasure again. There are no pleasure-boats on the Arno; and the shallowness of its waters (except in winter time, when the stream is too turbid and impetuous for boating) rendered it difficult to get any skiff light enough to float. Shelley, however, overcame the difficulty; he, together with a friend, contrived a boat such as the huntsmen carry about with them in the Maremma, to cross the sluggish but deep streams that intersect the forests,—a boat of laths and pitched canvas. It held three persons; and he was often seen on the Arno in it, to the horror of the Italians, who remonstrated on the danger, and could not understand how any one could take pleasure in an exercise that risked life. "Ma va per la vita!" they exclaimed. I

little thought how true their words would prove. He once ventured, with a friend, on the glassy sea of a calm day, down the Arno and round the coast, to Leghorn, which by keeping close in shore was very practicable. They returned to Pisa by the canal, when, missing the direct cut, they got entangled among weeds, and the boat upset; a wetting was all the harm done, except that the intense cold of his drenched clothes made Shelley faint. Once I went down with him to the mouth of the Arno; where the stream, then high and swift, met the tideless sea, and disturbed its sluggish waters. It was a waste and dreary scene; the desert sand stretched into a point surrounded by waves that broke idly though perpetually around; it was a scene very similar to Lido, of which he had said,—

> "I love all waste
> And solitary places; where we taste
> The pleasure of believing what we see
> Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be:
> And such was this wide ocean, and this shore
> More barren than its billows."

Our little boat was of greater use, unaccompanied by any danger, when we removed to the Baths. Some friends lived at the village of Pugnano, four miles off, and we went to and fro to see them, in our boat, by the canal; which, fed by the Serchio, was, though an artificial, a full and picturesque stream, making its way under verdant banks, sheltered by trees that dipped their boughs into the murmuring waters. By day, multitudes of ephemera darted to and fro on the surface: at night, the fireflies came out among the shrubs on the banks; the cicale at noonday kept up their hum; the aziola cooed in the quiet evening. It was a pleasant summer, bright in all but Shelley's health and inconstant spirits; yet he enjoyed himself greatly, and became more and more attached to the part of the country where chance appeared to cast us. Sometimes he projected taking a farm situated on the height of one of the near hills, surrounded by chesnut and pine woods, and overlooking a wide extent of country; or settling still further in the maritime Apennines, at Massa. Several of his slighter and unfinished poems were inspired by these scenes, and by the companions around us. It is the nature of that poetry however which overflows from the soul oftener to express sorrow and regret than joy; for it is when oppressed by the weight of life, and away from those he loves, that the poet has recourse to the solace of expression in verse.

Still, Shelley's passion was the ocean; and he wished that our summers, instead of being passed among the hills near Pisa, should be spent on the shores of the sea. It was very difficult to find a spot. We shrank from Naples from a fear that the heats would disagree with Percy: Leghorn had lost its only attraction, since our friends who had resided there were returned to England; and, Monte Nero being the resort of many English, we did not wish to find ourselves in the midst of a colony of chance travellers. No one then thought it possible to reside at Via Reggio, which latterly has become a summer resort. The low lands and bad air of Maremma, stretch the whole length of the western shores of the Mediterranean, till broken by the rocks and hills of Spezia. It was a vague idea, but Shelley suggested an excursion to Spezia, to see whether it would be feasible to spend a summer there. The beauty of the bay enchanted him. We saw no house to suit us: but the notion took root, and many circumstances, enchained as by fatality, occurred to urge him to execute it.

He looked forward this autumn with great pleasure to the prospect of a visit from Leigh Hunt. When Shelley visited Lord Byron at Ravenna, the latter had suggested his coming out, together with the plan of a periodical work in which they should all join. Shelley saw a prospect of good for the fortunes of his friend, and pleasure in his society; and instantly exerted himself to have the plan executed. He did not intend himself joining in the work: partly from pride, not wishing to have the air of acquiring readers for his poetry by associating it with the compositions of more popu-

lar writers; and also because he might feel shackled in the free expression of his opinions, if any friends were to be compromised. By those opinions, carried even to their utmost extent, he wished to live and die, as being in his conviction not only true, but such as alone would conduce to the moral improvement and happiness of mankind. The sale of the work might, meanwhile, either really or supposedly, be injured by the free expression of his thoughts; and this evil he resolved to avoid.

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1822.

THE MAGNETIC LADY TO HER PATIENT.

I.

"SLEEP, sleep on! forget thy pain.
My hand is on thy brow,
My spirit on thy brain,
My pity on thy heart, poor friend;
And from my fingers flow
The powers of life, and, like a sign,
Seal thee from thine hour of woe,
And brood on thee, but may not blend
With thine.

II.

"Sleep, sleep on!—I love thee not;
But when I think that he
Who made and makes my lot
As full of flowers as thine of weeds
Might have been lost like thee,
And that a hand which was not mine
Might then have charmed his agony,
As I another's—my heart bleeds
For thine.

III.

"Sleep, sleep, and with the slumber of
The dead and the unborn.
Forget thy life and love;
Forget that thou must wake; for ever
Forget the world's dull scorn;
Forget lost health, and the divine
Feelings which died in youth's brief morn;
And forget me, for I can never
Be thine.

IV.

" Like a cloud big with a May shower,
My soul weeps healing rain
On thee, thou withered flower.
It breathes mute music on thy sleep;
Its odour calms thy brain;
Its light within thy gloomy breast
Spreads like a second youth again.
By mine thy being is to its deep
Possessed.

V.

" The spell is done. How feel you now?"
" Better,—quite well," replied
The sleeper.—" What would do
You good, when suffering and awake?
What cure your head and side?"
"What would cure, that would kill me, Jane:
And, as I must on earth abide
Awhile, yet tempt me not to break
My chain."

LINES.

I.

When the lamp is shattered,
The light in the dust lies dead;
When the cloud is scattered,
The rainbow's glory is shed;
When the lute is broken,
Sweet notes are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.

II.

As music and splendour
Survive not the lamp and the lute,
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute:—
No song but sad dirges,
Like the wind in a ruined cell,
Or the mournful surges
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

III.

When hearts have once mingled,
Love first leaves the well-built nest;
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possessed.
O, Love, who bewailest
The frailty of all things here,
Why chose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home, and your bier?

IV.

Its passions will rock thee,
As the storms rock the ravens on high:
Bright reason will mock thee,
Like the sun from a wintry sky.
From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine eagle home
Leave thee naked to laughter
When leaves fall and cold winds come.

TO JANE—THE INVITATION.

BEST and brightest, come away!
Fairer far than this fair Day,
Which, like thee to those in sorrow,
Comes to bid a sweet good-morrow
To the rough Year just awake
In its cradle on the brake.
The brightest hour of unborn Spring,
Through the winter wandering,
Found, it seems, the halcyon Morn
To hoar February born.
Bending from heaven, in azure mirth,
It kissed the forehead of the Earth;
And smiled upon the silent sea;
And bade the frozen streams be free,
And waked to music all their fountains;
And breathed upon the frozen mountains;
And like a prophetess of May
Strewed flowers upon the barren way,

Making the wintry world appear
Like one on whom thou smilest, dear.

Away, away, from men and towns,
To the wild wood and the downs—
To the silent wilderness
Where the soul need not repress
Its music lest it should not find
An echo in another's mind,
While the touch of Nature's art
Harmonizes heart to heart.
I leave this notice on my door
For each accustomed visitor:—
"I am gone into the fields
To take what this sweet hour yields.
Reflection, you may come to-morrow;
Sit by the fireside with Sorrow.
You with the unpaid bill, Despair,—
You tiresome verse-reciter, Care,—
I will pay you in the grave,—
Death will listen to *your* stave.
Expectation too, be off!
To-day is for itself enough.
Hope, in pity, mock not Woe
With smiles, nor follow where I go;
Long having lived on your sweet food,
At length I find one moment's good
After long pain: with all your love,
This you never told me of."

Radiant Sister of the Day,
Awake! arise! and come away!
To the wild woods and the plains;
And the pools where winter rains
Image all their roof of leaves;
Where the pine its garland weaves
Of sapless green and ivy dun
Round stems that never kiss the sun;
Where the lawns and pastures be,
And the sandhills of the sea;—
When the melting hoar-frost wets
The daisy-star that never sets,
And wind-flowers, and violets

Which yet join not scent to hue,
Crown the pale year weak and new;
When the night is left behind
In the deep east, dun and blind,
And the blue noon is over us,
And the multitudinous
Billows murmur at our feet
Where the earth and ocean meet,
And all things seem only one
In the universal sun.

Pisa, February 1822.

TO JANE—THE RECOLLECTION.

I.

Now the last day of many days,
All beautiful and bright as thou,
The loveliest and the last, is dead.
Rise, Memory, and write its praise!
Up—to thy wonted work! come, trace
The epitaph of glory fled,—
For now the earth has changed its face,
A frown is on the heaven's brow.

II.

We wandered to the pine forest
That skirts the ocean's foam;
The lightest wind was in its nest,
The tempest in its home.
The whispering waves were half asleep,
The clouds were gone to play,
And on the bosom of the deep
The smile of heaven lay;
It seemed as if the hour were one
Sent from beyond the skies,
Which scattered from above the sun
A light of paradise.

III.

We paused amid the pines that stood
The giants of the waste,

Tortured by storms to shapes as rude
As serpents interlaced,
And soothed, by every azure breath
That under heaven is blown,
To harmonies and hues beneath,
As tender as its own;
Now all the tree-tops lay asleep
Like green waves on the sea,
As still as in the silent deep
The ocean woods may be.

IV.

How calm it was!—The silence there
By such a chain was bound
That even the busy woodpecker
Made stiller with her sound
The inviolable quietness;
The breath of peace we drew
With its soft motion made not less
The calm that round us grew.
There seemed, from the remotest seat
Of the white mountain waste,
To the soft flower beneath our feet,
A magic circle traced,—
A spirit interfused around,
A thrilling silent life:
To momentary peace it bound
Our mortal nature's strife.
And still, I felt, the centre of
The magic circle there
Was one fair form that filled with love
The lifeless atmosphere.

V.

We paused beside the pools that lie
Under the forest bough.
Each seemed as 'twere a little sky
Gulfed in a world below:
A firmament of purple light
Which in the dark earth lay,
More boundless than the depth of night,
And purer than the day—
In which the lovely forests grew

As in the upper air,
More perfect both in shape and hue
Than any spreading there.
There lay the glade, the neighbouring lawn,
And through the dark-green wood
The white sun twinkling like the dawn
Out of a speckled cloud.
Sweet views which in our world above
Can never well be seen
Were imaged in the water's love
Of that fair forest green;
And all was interfused beneath
With an elysian glow,
An atmosphere without a breath,
A softer day below.
Like one beloved, the scene had lent
To the dark water's breast
Its every leaf and lineament
With more than truth expressed;
Until an envious wind crept by,—
Like an unwelcome thought
Which from the mind's too faithful eye
Blots one dear image out.
Though thou art ever fair and kind,
And forests ever green,
Less oft is peace in Shelley's mind
Than calm in water seen.

2 February 1822.

WITH A GUITAR, TO JANE.

Ariel to Miranda.—Take
This slave of Music, for the sake
Of him who is the slave of thee;
And teach it all the harmony
In which thou canst, and only thou,
Make the delighted spirit glow,
Till joy denies itself again,
And, too intense, is turned to pain.
For, by permission and command
Of thine own Prince Ferdinand,

Poor Ariel sends this silent token
Of more than ever can be spoken;
Your guardian spirit Ariel, who
From life to life must still pursue
Your happiness, for thus alone
Can Ariel ever find his own.
From Prospero's enchanted cell,
As the mighty verses tell,
To the throne of Naples he
Lit you o'er the trackless sea,
Flitting on, your prow before,
Like a living meteor.
When you die, the silent Moon
In her interlunar swoon
Is not sadder in her cell
Than deserted Ariel.
When you live again on earth,—
Like an unseen star of birth,
Ariel guides you o'er the sea
Of life from your nativity.
Many changes have been run
Since Ferdinand and you begun
Your course of love, and Ariel still
Has tracked your steps and served your will.
Now, in humbler happier lot,
This is all remembered not;
And now, alas! the poor Sprite is
Imprisoned for some fault of his
In a body like a grave:
From you he only dares to crave,
For his service and his sorrow,
A smile to-day, a song to-morrow.

The artist who this idol wrought,
To echo all harmonious thought,
Felled a tree while on the steep
The woods were in their winter sleep,
Rocked in that repose divine
On the wind-swept Apennine,
And dreaming, some of Autumn past,
And some of Spring approaching fast,
And some of April buds and showers,

And some of songs in July bowers,
And all of love. And so this tree—
Oh that such our death may be!—
Died in sleep, and felt no pain,
To live in happier form again:
From which, beneath heaven's fairest star,
The artist wrought this loved Guitar,
And taught it justly to reply,
To all who question skilfully,
In language gentle as thine own;
Whispering in enamoured tone
Sweet oracles of woods and dells,
And summer winds in sylvan cells.
For it had learnt all harmonies
Of the plains and of the skies,
Of the forests and the mountains,
And the many-voicèd fountains;
The clearest echoes of the hills,
The softest notes of falling rills,
The melodies of birds and bees,
The murmuring of summer seas,
And pattering rain, and breathing dew,
And airs of evening; and it knew
That seldom-heard mysterious sound
Which, driven on its diurnal round
As it floats through boundless day,
Our world enkindles on its way.
All this it knows; but will not tell
To those who cannot question well
The Spirit that inhabits it.
It talks according to the wit
Of its companions; and no more
Is heard than has been felt before
By those who tempt it to betray
These secrets of an elder day.
But, sweetly as its answers will
Flatter hands of perfect skill,
It keeps its highest holiest tone
For our beloved Jane alone.

A DIRGE.

ROUGH wind that moanest loud
  Grief too sad for song;
Wild wind when sullen cloud
  Knells all the night long;
Sad storm whose tears are vain,
Bare woods whose branches stain,
Deep caves and dreary main,
  Wail for the world's wrong!

TO JANE.

THE keen stars were twinkling,
And the fair moon was rising among them,
    Dear Jane:
  The guitar was tinkling,
But the notes were not sweet till you sung them
    Again.
  As the moon's soft splendour
O'er the faint cold starlight of heaven
    Is thrown,
  So your voice most tender
To the strings without soul had then given
    Its own.

  The stars will awaken,
Though the moon sleep a full hour later,
    To-night;
  No leaf will be shaken
Whilst the dews of your melody scatter
    Delight.
  Though the sound overpowers,
Sing again, with your dear voice revealing
    A tone
  Of some world far from ours
Where music and moonlight and feeling
    Are one.

LINES WRITTEN IN THE BAY OF LERICI.

She left me at the silent time
When the moon had ceased to climb
The azure path of heaven's steep,
And, like an albatross asleep,
Balanced on her wings of light,
Hovered in the purple night,
Ere she sought her ocean nest
In the chambers of the west.
She left me; and I stayed alone,
Thinking over every tone,
Which, though silent to the ear,
The enchanted heart could hear,
Like notes which die when born, but still
Haunt the echoes of the hill,
And feeling ever—oh too much!—
The soft vibration of her touch,
As if her gentle hand even now
Lightly trembled on my brow.
And thus, although she absent were,
Memory gave me all of her
That even Fancy dares to claim.
Her presence had made weak and tame
All passions, and I lived alone
In the time which is our own;
The past and future were forgot,
As they had been, and would be, not.
But soon, the guardian angel gone,
The dæmon reassumed his throne
In my faint heart. I dare not speak
My thoughts; but thus disturbed and weak
I sat, and saw the vessels glide
Over the ocean bright and wide,
Like spirit-winged chariots sent
O'er some serenest element
For ministrations strange and far,
As if to some elysian star
They sailed for drink to medicine
Such sweet and bitter pain as mine.
And the wind that winged their flight
From the land came fresh and light;

And the scent of wingèd flowers,
And the coolness of the hours
Of dew, and sweet warmth left by day,
Were scattered o'er the twinkling bay;
And the fisher, with his lamp
And spear, about the low rocks damp
Crept, and struck the fish which came
To worship the delusive flame.
Too happy they, whose pleasure sought
Extinguishes all sense and thought
Of the regret that pleasure leaves,—
Destroying life alone, not peace!

EPITAPH.

THESE are two friends whose lives were undivided;
So let their memory be, now they have glided
Under their grave; let not their bones be parted,
For their two hearts in life were single-hearted.

NOTE ON POEMS OF 1822, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

THIS morn thy gallant bark
Sailed on a sunny sea:
'Tis noon, and tempests dark
Have wrecked it on the lee.
Ah woe! ah woe!
By Spirits of the deep
Thou'rt cradled on the billow
To thy eternal sleep.

Thou sleep'st upon the shore
Beside the knelling surge,
And Sea-nymphs evermore
Shall sadly chant thy dirge.
They come, they come,
The Spirits of the deep,—
While near thy seaweed pillow
My lonely watch I keep.

From far across the sea
I hear a loud lament,
By Echo's voice for thee
From ocean's caverns sent.
Oh list! Oh list!
The Spirits of the deep!
They raise a wail of sorrow,
While I for ever weep.

WITH this last year of the life of Shelley these Notes end. They are not what I intended them to be. I began with energy, and a burning desire to impart to the world, in worthy language, the sense I have of the virtues and genius of the beloved and the lost; my strength has failed under the task. Recurrence to the past, full of its own deep and unforgotten joys and sorrows, contrasted with succeeding years of painful and solitary struggle, has shaken my health. Days of great suffering have followed my attempts to write, and these again produced a weakness and languor that spread their sinister influence over these notes. I dislike speaking of myself, but cannot help apologizing to the dead, and to the public, for not having executed in the manner I desired the history I engaged to give of Shelley's writings.*

The winter of 1822 was passed in Pisa, if we might call that season winter in which autumn merged into Spring after the interval of but few days of bleaker weather. Spring sprang up early, and with extreme beauty. Shelley had conceived the idea of writing a tragedy on the subject of Charles I. It was one that he believed adapted for a drama; full of intense interest, contrasted character, and busy passion. He had recommended it long before, when he encouraged me to attempt a play. Whether the subject proved more difficult than he anticipated, or whether in fact he could not bend his mind away from the broodings and wanderings of thought, divested from human interest, which he best loved, I cannot tell; but he proceeded slowly, and threw it aside for one of the most mystical of his poems, *The Triumph of Life*, on which he was employed at the last.

His passion for boating was fostered at this time by having among our friends several sailors. His favourite companion, Edward Ellerker Williams, of the 8th Light Dragoons, had begun his life in the navy, and had afterwards entered the army; he had spent several years in India, and his love for adventure and manly exercises accorded with Shelley's taste. It was their favourite plan to build a boat such as they could manage themselves, and, living on the sea-coast, to enjoy at every hour and season the pleasure they loved best. Captain Roberts, R.N., undertook to build the boat at Genoa, where he was also occupied in building the *Bolivar* for Lord Byron. Ours was to be an open boat, on a model taken from one of the royal dockyards. I have since heard that there was a defect in this model, and that it was never sea-worthy. In the month of February, Shelley and his friend went to Spezia to seek for houses for us. Only one was to be found at all suitable; however, a trifle such as not finding a house could not stop Shelley; the one found was to serve for all. It was unfurnished; we sent our furniture by sea, and with a good deal of precipitation, arising from his impatience, made our removal. We left Pisa on the 26th of April.

The Bay of Spezia is of considerable extent, and divided by a rocky promontory into a larger and smaller one. The town of Lerici is situated on the eastern point, and in the depth of the smaller bay, which bears the name of this town, is the village of Sant' Arenzo. Our house, Casa Magni, was close to this village; the sea came up to the door, a steep hill sheltered it behind. The proprietor of the estate on which it was situated was insane; he had begun to erect a large house at the summit of the hill behind, but his malady prevented its being finished, and it was falling into ruin. He had (and this to the Italians had seemed a glaring symptom of very decided madness) rooted up the olives on the hill side, and planted forest trees. These were

* I at one time feared that the correction of the press might be less exact through my illness; but I believe that it is nearly free from error. Some asterisks occur in a few pages, as they did in the volume of *Posthumous Poems*, either because they refer to private concerns, or because the original manuscript was left imperfect. Did any one see the papers from which I drew that volume, the wonder would be how any eyes or patience were capable of extracting it from so confused a mass, interlined and broken into fragments, so that the sense could only be deciphered and joined by guesses which might seem rather intuitive than founded on reasoning. Yet I believe no mistake was made.

mostly young, but the plantation was more in English taste than I ever elsewhere saw in Italy; some fine walnut and ilex trees intermingled their dark massy foliage, and formed groups which still haunt my memory, as then they satiated the eye with a sense of loveliness. The scene was indeed of unimaginable beauty. The blue extent of waters, the almost land-locked bay, the near castle of Lerici shutting it in to the east, and distant Porto Venere to the west; the varied forms of the precipitous rocks that bound-in the beach, over which there was only a winding rugged footpath towards Lerici, and none on the other side; the tideless sea leaving no sands nor shingle; formed a picture such as one sees in Salvator Rosa's landscapes only. Sometimes the sunshine vanished when the scirocco raged—the "ponente" the wind was called on that shore. The gales and squalls that hailed our first arrival surrounded the bay with foam; the howling wind swept round our exposed house, and the sea roared unremittingly, so that we almost fancied ourselves on board ship. At other times sunshine and calm invested sea and sky, and the rich tints of Italian heaven bathed the scene in bright and ever-varying tints.

The natives were wilder than the place. Our near neighbours of Sant' Arenzo were more like savages than any people I ever before lived among. Many a night they passed on the beach, singing, or rather howling; the women dancing about among the waves that broke at their feet, the men leaning against the rocks and joining in their loud wild chorus. We could get no provisions nearer than Sarzana, at a distance of three miles and a half off, with the torrent of the Magra between; and even there the supply was very deficient. Had we been wrecked on an island of the South Seas, we could scarcely have felt ourselves further from civilization and comfort; but, where the sun shines, the latter becomes an unnecessary luxury, and we had enough society among ourselves. Yet I confess housekeeping became rather a toilsome task, especially as I was suffering in my health, and could not exert myself actively.

At first the fatal boat had not arrived, and was expected with great impatience. On Monday May 12th it came. Williams records the long-wished-for fact in his journal: "Cloudy and threatening weather. M. Maglian called; and after dinner, and while walking with him on the terrace, we discovered a strange sail coming round the point of Porto Venere, which proved at length to be Shelley's boat. She had left Genoa on Thursday last, but had been driven back by the prevailing bad winds. A Mr. Heslop and two English seamen brought her round, and they speak most highly of her performances. She does indeed excite my surprise and admiration. Shelley and I walked to Lerici, and made a stretch off the land to try her: and I find she fetches whatever she looks at. In short, we have now a perfect plaything for the summer."—It was thus that short-sighted mortals welcomed Death, he having disguised his grim form in a pleasing mask! The time of the friends was now spent on the sea; the weather became fine, and our whole party often passed the evenings on the water when the wind promised pleasant sailing. Shelley and Williams made longer excursions; they sailed several times to Massa. They had engaged one of the seamen who brought her round, a boy, by name Charles Vivian; and they had not the slightest apprehension of danger. When the weather was unfavourable, they employed themselves with alterations in the rigging, and by building a boat of canvas and reeds, as light as possible, to have on board the other for the convenience of landing in waters too shallow for the larger vessel. When Shelley was on board, he had his papers with him; and much of the *Triumph of Life* was written as he sailed or weltered on that sea which was soon to engulf him.

The heats set in in the middle of June; the days became excessively hot. But the sea breeze cooled the air at noon, and extreme heat always put Shelley in spirits. A long drought had preceded the heat; and prayers for rain were being put up in the churches, and processions of relics for the same effect took place in every town. At this time we received letters announcing the arrival of Leigh Hunt at Genoa. Shelley

was very eager to see him. I was confined to my room by severe illness, and could not move; it was agreed that Shelley and Williams should go to Leghorn in the boat. Strange that no fear of danger crossed our minds! Living on the sea-shore, the ocean became as a plaything: as a child may sport with a lighted stick, till a spark inflames a forest, and spreads destruction over all, so did we fearlessly and blindly tamper with danger, and make a game of the terrors of the ocean. Our Italian neighbours, even, trusted themselves as far as Massa in the skiff; and the running down the line of coast to Leghorn gave no more notion of peril than a fair-weather inland navigation would have done to those who had never seen the sea. Once, some months before, Trelawny had raised a warning voice as to the difference of our calm bay and the open sea beyond; but Shelley and his friend, with their one sailor boy, thought themselves a match for the storms of the Mediterranean, in a boat which they looked upon as equal to all it was put to do.

On the 1st of July they left us. If ever shadow of future ill darkened the present hour, such was over my mind when they went. During the whole of our stay at Lerici, an intense presentiment of coming evil brooded over my mind, and covered this beautiful place and genial summer with the shadow of coming misery. I had vainly struggled with these emotions—they seemed accounted for by my illness; but at this hour of separation they recurred with renewed violence. I did not anticipate danger for them, but a vague expectation of evil shook me to agony, and I could scarcely bring myself to let them go. The day was calm and clear; and, a fine breeze rising at twelve, they weighed for Leghorn. They made the run of about fifty miles in seven hours and a half. The *Bolivar* was in port; and, the regulations of the health-office not permitting them to go on shore after sunset, they borrowed cushions from the larger vessel, and slept on board their boat.

They spent a week at Pisa and Leghorn. The want of rain was severely felt in the country. The weather continued sultry and fine. I have heard that Shelley all this time was in brilliant spirits. Not long before, talking of presentiment, he had said the only one that he ever found infallible was the certain advent of some evil fortune when he felt peculiarly joyous. Yet, if ever fate whispered of coming disaster, such inaudible, but not unfelt, prognostics hovered around us. The beauty of the place seemed unearthly in its excess: the distance we were at from all signs of civilization, the sea at our feet, its murmurs or its roaring for ever in our ears,—all these things led the mind to brood over strange thoughts, and, lifting it from every-day life, caused it to be familiar with the unreal. A sort of spell surrounded us; and each day, as the voyagers did not return, we grew restless and disquieted, and yet, strange to say, we were not fearful of the most apparent danger.

The spell snapped, it was all over; an interval of agonizing doubt—of days passed in miserable journeys to gain tidings, of hopes that took firmer root even as they were more baseless—was changed to the certainty of the death that eclipsed all happiness for the survivors for evermore.

There was something in our fate peculiarly harrowing. The remains of those we lost were cast on shore; but, by the quarantine laws of the coast, we were not permitted to have possession of them—the law with respect to everything cast on land by the sea being that such should be burned, to prevent the possibility of any remnant bringing the plague into Italy; and no representation could alter the law. At length, through the kind and unwearied exertions of Mr. Dawkins, our Chargé d'Affaires at Florence, we gained permission to receive the ashes after the bodies were consumed. Nothing could equal the zeal of Trelawny in carrying our wishes into effect. He was indefatigable in his exertions, and full of [illegible] thought and sagacity in his arrangements. It was a fearful [illegible] he stood before us at last, his hands scorched and blistered by the flames of the funeral pyre, and by touching the burnt relics as he placed them in the receptacles [illegible] for the purpose. And there, in compass of that small case, was gathered all that remained on earth of him whose genius and

virtue were a crown of glory to the world—whose love had been the source of happiness, peace, and good,—to be buried with him!

The concluding stanzas of the *Adonais* pointed out where the remains ought to be deposited; in addition to which our beloved child lay buried in the cemetery at Rome. Thither Shelley's ashes were conveyed; and they rest beneath one of the antique weed-grown towers that recur at intervals in the circuit of the massy ancient wall of Rome. He selected the hallowed place himself; there is

> "the sepulchre,
> Oh not of him, but of our joy!—
> . . . . . .
> "And grey walls moulder round, on which dull Time
> Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
> And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
> Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
> This refuge for his memory, doth stand
> Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath
> A field is spread, on which a newer hand
> Have pitched in heaven's smile their camp of death,
> Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath."

Could sorrow for the lost, and shuddering anguish at the vacancy left behind, be soothed by poetic imaginations, there was something in Shelley's fate to mitigate pangs which yet, alas! could not be so mitigated; for hard reality brings too miserably home to the mourner all that is lost of happiness, all of lonely unsolaced struggle that remains. Still, though dreams and hues of poetry cannot blunt grief, it invests his fate with a sublime fitness, which those less nearly allied may regard with complacency. A year before, he had poured into verse all such ideas about death as give it a glory of its own. He had, as it now seems, almost anticipated his own destiny; and, when the mind figures his skiff wrapped from sight by the thunder-storm, as it was last seen upon the purple sea, and then, as the cloud of the tempest passed away, no sign remained of where it had been*—who but will regard as a prophecy the last stanza of the *Adonais*?

> "The breath whose might I have invoked in song
> Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven
> Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
> Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
> The massy earth and sphered skies are riven!
> I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar!
> Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of heaven,
> The soul of Adonais, like a star,
> Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are."

Putney, May 1*st*, 1839.

* Captain Roberts watched the vessel with his glass from the top of the light-house of Leghorn, on its homeward track. They were off Via Reggio, at some distance from shore, when a storm was driven over the sea. It enveloped them and several larger vessels in darkness. When the cloud passed onward, Roberts looked again, and saw every other vessel sailing on the ocean except their little schooner, which had vanished. From that time he could scarcely doubt the fatal truth; yet we fancied that they might have been driven towards Elba, or Corsica, and so be saved. The observation made as to the spot where the boat disappeared caused it to be found, through the exertions of Trelawny for that effect. It had gone down in ten fathom water; it had not capsized, and, except such things as had floated from her, everything was found on board exactly as it had been placed when they sailed. The boat itself was uninjured. Roberts possessed himself of her, and decked her; but she proved not sea-worthy, and her shattered planks now lie rotting on the shore of one of the Ionian islands, on which she was wrecked.

FRAGMENTS.

I.

TO ———.

THY dewy looks sink in my breast;
Thy gentle words stir poison there:
Thou hast disturbed the only rest
That was the portion of despair.
Subdued to duty's hard control,
I could have borne my wayward lot;
The chains that bind this ruined soul
Had cankered then, but crushed it not.

March 1814.

II.

TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN.

I.

MINE eyes were dim with tears unshed;
Yes, I was firm. Thus wert not thou.
My baffled looks did fear yet dread
To meet thy looks—I could not know
How anxiously they sought to shine
With soothing pity upon mine.

. . . . . .

II.

To sit and curb the soul's mute rage
Which preys upon itself alone;
To curse the life which is the cage
Of fettered grief that dares not groan,
Hiding from many a careless eye
The scorned load of agony:—

III.

Whilst thou alone, then not regarded,
The . . . . thou alone shouldst be.
To spend years thus, and be rewarded
As thou, sweet love, requitedst me
When none were near—Oh! I did wake
From torture for that moment's sake!

IV.

Upon my heart thy accents sweet
  Of peace and pity fell, like dew
On flowers half dead; thy lips did meet
  Mine tremblingly; thy dark eyes threw
Their soft persuasion on my brain,
Charming away its dream of pain.

V.

We are not happy, sweet! our state
  Is strange and full of doubt and fear;
More need of words that ills abate;—
  Reserve or censure come not near
Our sacred friendship, lest there be
No solace left for thee and me.

VI.

Gentle and good and mild thou art;
  Nor can I live if thou appear
Aught but thyself, or turn thine heart
  Away from me, or stoop to wear
The mask of scorn, although it be
To hide the love thou feel'st for me.

June 1814.

III.

TO ———.

YET look on me—take not thine eyes away,
  Which feed upon the love within mine own,—
Which is indeed but the reflected ray
  Of thine own beauty from my spirit thrown.
  Yet speak to me: thy voice is as the tone
Of my heart's echo, and I think I hear
  That thou yet lovest me. Yet thou alone,
Like one before a mirror, without care
Of aught but thine own features imaged there;—
And yet I wear out life in watching thee,
  A toil so sweet at times. And thou indeed
Art kind when I am sick, and pityest me.

IV.

DEAR home, thou scene of earliest hopes and joys,
The least of which wronged Memory ever makes
Bitterer than all thine unremembered tears.

1816.

V.

A SHOVEL of his ashes took
From the hearth's obscurest nook,
Muttering mysteries as she went.
Helen and Henry knew that granny
Was as much afraid of ghosts as any,
And so they followed hard—
But Helen clung to her brother's arm,
And her own spasm made her shake.

1816.

VI.

THOSE whom nor power, nor lying faith, nor toil,
Nor Custom, queen of many slaves, makes blind,
Have ever grieved that man should be the spoil
Of his own weakness, and with earnest mind
Fed hopes of its redemption: these recur
Chastened by deathful victory now, and find
Foundations in this foulest age, and stir
Me whom they cheer to be their minister.

1817.

VII.

FOR me, my friend,—if not that tears did tremble
In my faint eyes, and that my heart beat fast
With feelings which make rapture pain resemble,—
Yet, from thy voice that Falsehood starts aghast,
I thank thee. Let the tyrant keep
His chains and tears; yea, let him weep
With rage to see thee freshly risen,
Like strength from slumber, from the prison
In which he vainly hoped the soul to bind
Which on the chains must prey that fetter humankind.

1817.

VIII.

ONCE more descend
The shadows of my soul upon mankind;

For, to those hearts with which they never blend,
Thoughts are but shadows which the flashing mind,
From the swift clouds which track its flight of fire,
Casts on the gloomy world it leaves behind.

1817.

IX.

Oh that a chariot of cloud were mine—
Of cloud which the wild tempest weaves in air,
When the moon over the ocean's line
Is spreading the locks of her bright grey hair!
Oh that a chariot of cloud were mine!
I would sail on the waves of the billowy wind
To the mountain peak and the rocky lake,
And the . . .

1817.

X.

A GOLDEN-WINGÈD Angel stood
Before the Eternal Judgment-seat:
His looks were wild, and Devils' blood
Stained his dainty hands and feet.
. . . The Father and the Son
Knew that strife was now begun.
They knew that Satan had broken his chain,
And, with millions of demons in his train,
Was ranging over the world again.
Before the Angel had told his tale,
A sweet and a creeping sound
Like the rushing of wings was heard around;
And suddenly the lamps grew pale—
The lamps, before the Archangels seven,
That burn continually in heaven.

XI.

PRINCE ATHANASE.

PART I.

THERE was a youth who, as with toil and travel,
Had grown quite weak and grey before his time;
Nor any could the restless griefs unravel

Which burned within him, withering up his prime,
And goading him like fiends from land to land.
Not his the load of any secret crime,

For nought of ill his heart could understand,
But pity and wild sorrow for the same;
Not his the thirst for glory or command

Baffled with blast of hope-consuming shame;
Nor evil joys which fire the vulgar breast,
And quench in speedy smoke its feeble flame,

Had left within his soul the dark unrest:
Nor what religion fables of the grave
Feared he, Philosophy's accepted guest.

For none than he a purer heart could have,
Or that loved good more for itself alone;
Of nought in heaven or earth was he the slave.

What sorrow, strange and shadowy and unknown,
Sent him a hopeless wanderer through mankind?
If with a human sadness he did groan,

He had a gentle yet aspiring mind,
Just, innocent, with varied learning fed;—
And such a glorious consolation find

In others' joy when all their own is dead.
He loved and laboured for his kind in grief;
And yet, unlike all others, it is said

That from such toil he never found relief.
Although a child of fortune and of power,
Of an ancestral name the orphan chief,

His soul had wedded Wisdom, and her dower
Is love and justice; clothed in which he sate
Apart from men, as in a lonely tower,

Pitying the tumult of their dark estate.
Yet even in youth did he not e'er abuse
The strength of wealth or thought, to consecrate

Those false opinions which the harsh rich use
To blind the world they famish for their pride;
Nor did he hold from any man his dues,

But, like a steward in honest dealings tried,
With those who toiled and wept, the poor and wise,
His riches and his cares he did divide.

Fearless he was, and scorning all disguise;
What he dared do or think, though men might start,
He spoke with mild yet unaverted eyes.

Liberal he was of soul, and frank of heart,
And to his many friends—all loved him well—
Whate'er he knew or felt he would impart,

If words he found those inmost thoughts to tell;
If not, he smiled or wept.—And his weak foes
He neither spurned nor hated: though with fell

And mortal hate their thousand voices rose,
They passed like aimless arrows from his ear.
Nor did his heart or mind its portal close

To those or them, or any whom life's sphere
May comprehend within its wide array.—
What sadness made that vernal spirit sere?

He knew not. Though his life day after day
Was failing like an unreplenished stream;
Though in his eyes a cloud and burthen lay

Through which his soul, like Vesper's serene beam
Piercing the chasms of ever-rising clouds,
Shone, softly burning; though his lips did seem

Like reeds which quiver in impetuous floods,
And through his sleep and o'er each waking hour
Thoughts after thoughts, unresting multitudes,

Were driven within him by some secret power
Which bade them blaze and live and roll afar
(Like lights and sounds from haunted tower to tower

O'er castled mountains borne when tempest's war
Is levied by the night-contending winds,
And the pale dalesmen watch with eager ear);

Though such were in his spirit, as the fiends
Which wake and feed on everliving woe;
What was this grief which ne'er in other minds

A mirror found? He knew not—none could know.
But on whoe'er might question him he turned
The light of his frank eyes, as if to show

He knew not of the grief within that burned,
But asked forbearance with a mournful look;
Or spoke in words from which none ever learned

The cause of his disquietude; or shook
With spasms of silent passion; or turned pale:
So that his friends soon rarely undertook

To stir his secret pain without avail;—
For all who knew and loved him then perceived
That there was drawn an adamantine veil

Between his heart and mind,—both unrelieved
Wrought in his brain and bosom separate strife.
Some said that he was mad; others believed

That memories of an antenatal life
Made this where now he dwelt a penal hell;
And others said that such mysterious grief

From God's displeasure, like a darkness, fell
On souls like his, which owned no higher law
Than love,—love calm, steadfast, invincible

By mortal fear or supernatural awe.
And others: "'Tis the shadow of a dream
Which the veiled eye of Memory never saw,

But through the soul's abyss, like some dark stream
Through shattered mines and caverns underground,
Rolls, shaking its foundations; and no beam

Of joy may rise but it is quenched and drowned
In the dim whirlpools of this dream obscure.
Soon its exhausted waters will have found

A lair of rest beneath thy spirit pure,
O Athanase! In one so good and great,
Evil or tumult cannot long endure."

So spake they, idly of another's state
Babbling vain words and fond philosophy:
This was their consolation. Such debate

Men held with one another. Nor did he,
Like one who labours with a human woe,
Decline this talk: as if its theme might be

Another, not himself, he to and fro
Questioned and canvassed it with subtlest wit.
And none but those who loved him best could know—

That which he knew not—how it galled and bit
His weary mind, this converse vain and cold;
For, like an eyeless nightmare, grief did sit

Upon his being,—a snake which fold by fold
Pressed out the life of life, a clinging fiend
Which clenched him, if he stirred, with deadlier hold.
And so his grief remained—let it remain—untold.

PART II.

PRINCE ATHANASE had one beloved friend;
An old old man, with hair of silver white,
And lips where heavenly smiles would hang and blend

With his wise words, and eyes whose arrowy light
Shone like the reflex of a thousand minds.
He was the last whom superstition's blight

Had spared in Greece—the blight that cramps and blinds,—
And in his olive bower at Œnoe
Had sate from earliest youth. Like one who finds

A fertile island in the barren sea,
One mariner who has survived his mates
Many a drear month in a great ship—so he

With soul-sustaining songs and sweet debates
Of ancient lore there fed his lonely being.
"The mind becomes that which it contemplates:"

And thus Zonoras, by for ever seeing
Their bright creations, grew like wisest men.
And, when he heard the crash of nations fleeing

A bloodier power than ruled thy ruins then,
O sacred Hellas! many weary years
He wandered—till the path of Laian's glen

Was grass-grown, and the unremembered tears
Were dry in Laian for their honoured chief,
Who fell in Byzant, pierced by Moslem spears.

And, as the lady looked with faithful grief
From her high lattice o'er the rugged path
Where she once saw that horseman toil, with brief

And blighting hope, who with the news of death
Struck body and soul as with a mortal blight,
She saw, beneath the chesnuts far beneath,

An old man toiling up, a weary wight.
And soon within her hospitable hall
She saw his white hairs glittering in the light

Of the wood fire, and round his shoulders fall,
And his wan visage and his withered mien,
Yet calm and gentle and majestical.

And Athanase, her child, who must have been
Then three years old, sate opposite and gazed
In patient silence.

. . . .

Such was Zonoras: and, as daylight finds
One amaranth glittering on the path of frost
When autumn nights have nipped all weaker kinds,

Thus through his age, dark, cold, and tempest-tossed,
Shone truth upon Zonoras; and he filled
From fountains pure, nigh overgrown and lost,

The spirit of Prince Athanase, a child,
With soul-sustaining songs of ancient lore,
And philosophic wisdom, clear and mild.

And sweet and subtle talk now evermore
The pupil and the master shared; until,
Sharing that undiminishable store,

The youth, as shadows on a grassy hill
Outrun the winds that chase them, soon outran
His teacher, and did teach with native skill

Strange truths and new to that experienced man.
Still they were friends, as few have ever been
Who mark the extremes of life's discordant span.

So in the caverns of the forest green,
Or by the rocks of echoing ocean hoar,
Zonoras and Prince Athanase were seen

By summer woodmen. And, when winter's roar
Sounded o'er earth and sea its blast of war,
The Balearic fisher, driven from shore,

Hanging upon the peaked wave afar,
Then saw their lamp from Laian's turret gleam,
Piercing the stormy darkness, like a star

Which pours beyond the sea one steadfast beam,
Whilst all the constellations of the sky
Seemed reeling through the storm; they did but seem—

For, lo! the wintry clouds are all gone by,
And bright Arcturus through yon pines is glowing,
And far o'er southern waves immovably

Belted Orion hangs—warm light is flowing
From the young moon into the sunset's chasm.—
"O summer eve! with power divine, bestowing

On thine own bird the sweet enthusiasm
Which overflows in notes of liquid gladness,
Filling the sky like light! How many a spasm

Of fevered brains oppressed with grief and madness
Were lulled by thee, delightful nightingale!
And these soft waves murmuring a gentle sadness,

And the far sighings of yon piny dale
Made vocal by some wind, we feel not here.—
I bear alone what nothing may avail

To lighten—a strange load!"—No human ear
Heard this lament; but o'er the visage wan
Of Athanase a ruffling atmosphere

Of dark emotion, a swift shadow, ran,
Like wind upon some forest-bosomed lake,
Glassy and dark. And that divine old man

Beheld his mystic friend's whole being shake,
Even where its inmost depths were gloomiest:
And with a calm and measured voice he spake,

And with a soft and equal pressure pressed
That cold lean hand. "Dost thou remember yet,
When the curved moon, then lingering in the west,

Paused in yon waves her mighty horns to wet,
How in those beams we walked, half resting on the sea?
'Tis just one year—sure thou dost not forget!

Then Plato's words of light in thee and me
Lingered like moonlight in the moonless east,
For we had just then read—thy memory

Is faithful now—the story of the feast;
And Agathon and Diotima seemed
From death and dark forgetfulness released."

. . . .

'Twas at the season when the Earth upsprings
From slumber. As a spherèd angel's child,
Shadowing its eyes with green and golden wings,

Stands up before its mother bright and mild,
Of whose soft voice the air expectant seems—
So stood before the Sun, which shone and smiled

To see it rise thus joyous from its dreams,
The fresh and radiant Earth. The hoary grove
Waxed green, and flowers burst forth like starry beams;

The grass in the warm sun did start and move,
And sea-buds burst beneath the waves serene.
How many a one, though none be near to love,

Loves then the shade of his own soul, half seen
In any mirror—or the Spring's young minions,
The wingèd leaves amid the copses green!

How many a spirit then puts on the pinions
Of fancy, and outstrips the lagging blast,
And his own steps—and over wide dominions

Sweeps in his dream-drawn chariot, far and fast,
More fleet than storms!—the wide world shrinks below,
When winter and despondency are past.

. . . .

'Twas at this season that Prince Athanase
Passed the white Alps. Those eagle-baffling mountains
Slept in their shrouds of snow. Beside the ways

The waterfalls were voiceless; for their fountains
Were changed to mines of sunless crystal now,
Or, by the curdling winds—like brazen wings

Which clanged along the mountain's marble brow—
Warped into adamantine fretwork, hung,
And filled with frozen light the chasm below.

. . . . .

THOU art the wine whose drunkenness is all
We can desire, O Love! and happy souls,
Ere from thy vine the leaves of autumn fall,

Catch thee, and feed from their o'erflowing bowls
Thousands who thirst for thy ambrosial dew.
Thou art the radiance which where ocean rolls

Investeth it; and, when the heavens are blue,
Thou fillest them; and, when the earth is fair
The shadows of thy moving wings imbue

Its deserts and its mountains, till they wear
Beauty like some bright robe. Thou ever soarest
Among the towers of men; and as soft air

In Spring, which moves the unawakened forest,
Clothing with leaves its branches bare and bleak,
Thou floatest among men, and aye implorest

That which from thee they should implore. The weak
Alone kneel to thee, offering up the hearts
The strong have broken:—yet where shall any seek

A garment, whom thou clothest not?

. . . . . .

HER hair was brown; her spherèd eyes were brown,
And in their dark and liquid moisture swam
Like the dim orb of the eclipsèd moon;

Yet, when the spirit flashed beneath, there came
The light from them, as when tears of delight
Double the western planet's serene frame.

Marlow, 1817.

XII.

TO CONSTANTIA.

THE rose, that drinks the fountain dew
In the pleasant air of noon,

Grows pale and blue with altered hue
In the gaze of the nightly moon;
For the planet of frost, so cold and bright,
Makes it wan with her borrowed light.

Such is my heart:—roses are fair,
And that at best a withered blossom;
But thy false care did idly wear
Its withered leaves in a faithless bosom,
And fed with love, like air and dew,
Its growth.

1817.

XIII.

No, Music, thou art not the God of Love;
Unless Love feeds upon its own sweet self,
Till it becomes all Music murmurs of.

1817.

XIV.

MUSIC.

THE silver key of the fountain of tears,
Where the spirit drinks till the brain is wild;
Softest grave of a thousand fears,
Where their mother, Care, like a drowsy chil
Is laid asleep in flowers.

1817.

XV.

To thirst, and find no fill—to wail, and wander
With short unsteady steps—to pause and ponder—
To feel the blood run through the veins, and tingle
Where busy thought and blind sensation mingle—
To nurse the image of unfelt caresses,
Till dim imagination just possesses
The half-created shadow.

1817.

XVI.

WEALTH and dominion fade into the mass
Of the great sea of human right and wrong,
When once from our possession they must pass;
But love, though misdirected, is among

The things which are immortal, and surpass
All that frail stuff which will be or which was.

1817.

XVII.

My thoughts arise and fade in solitude;
The verse that would invest them melts away
Like moonlight in the heaven of spreading day.
How beautiful they were! how firm they stood,
Flecking the starry sky like woven pearl!

1817.

XVIII.

OTHO.

Thou wert not, Cassius, and thou couldst not be,
"Last of the Romans,"—though thy memory claim
From Brutus his own glory, and on thee
Rests the full splendour of his sacred fame;
Nor he who dared make the foul tyrant quail
Amid his cowering senate with thy name;
Though thou and he were great, it will avail
To thine own fame that Otho's should not fail.

'Twill wrong thee not: thou wouldst, if thou couldst feel,
Abjure such envious fame. Great Otho died
Like thee: he sanctified his country's steel,
At once the tyrant and tyrannicide,
In his own blood. A deed it was to wring
Tears from all men—though full of gentle pride,
Such pride as from impetuous love may spring
That will not be refused its offering.

Dark is the realm of grief: but human things
Those may not know who cannot weep for them.

1817.

XIX.

TO MARY SHELLEY.

O Mary dear, that you were here!
With your brown eyes bright and clear—
And your sweet voice, like a bird
Singing love to its lone mate
In the ivy bower disconsolate,

Voice the sweetest ever heard—
And your brow more . . .
Than the . . . sky
Of this azure Italy.
Mary dear, come to me soon!
I am not well whilst thou art far.
As sunset to the spherèd moon,
As twilight to the western star,
Thou, belovèd, art to me.

O Mary dear, that you were here!
The castle echo whispers "Here!"

Este, September 1818.

XX.

THE WOODMAN AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

A WOODMAN, whose rough heart was out of tune
(I think such hearts yet never came to good),
Hated to hear, under the stars or moon,

One nightingale in an interfluous wood
Satiate the hungry dark with melody.
And as a vale is watered by a flood,

Or as the moonlight fills the open sky
Struggling with darkness—as a tuberose
Peoples some Indian dell with scents which lie

Like clouds above the flower from which they rose—
The singing of that happy nightingale
In this sweet forest, from the golden close

Of evening till the star of dawn may fail,
Was interfused upon the silentness.
The folded roses and the violets pale

Heard her within their slumbers; the abyss
Of heaven with all its planets; the dull ear
Of the night-cradled Earth; the loneliness

Of the circumfluous waters. Every sphere,
And every flower and beam and cloud and wave,
And every wind of the mute atmosphere,

And every beast stretched in its rugged cave,
And every bird lulled on its mossy bough,
And every silver moth fresh from the grave

Which is its cradle (ever from below
  Aspiring, like one who loves too fair, too far,
To be consumed within the purest glow

  Of one serene and unapproachèd star,
As if it were a lamp of earthly light,—
  Unconscious, as some human lovers are,

Itself how low, how high beyond all height
  The heaven where it would perish), and every form
That worshiped in the temple of the night,

  Was awed into delight, and by the charm
Girt as with an interminable zone;
  Whilst that sweet bird, whose music was a storm

Of sound, shook forth the dull oblivion
  Out of their dreams. Harmony became love
In every soul but one.

. . . . . .

And so this man returned with axe and saw
  At evening close from killing the tall treen;
The soul of whom, by Nature's gentle law,

  Was each a Wood-nymph, and kept ever green
The pavement and the roof of the wild copse,
  Chequering the sunlight of the blue serene

With jagged leaves, and from the forest tops
  Singing the winds to sleep, or weeping oft
Fast showers of aërial water-drops

  Into her mother's bosom sweet and soft,—
Nature's pure tears which have no bitterness.
  Around the cradles of the birds aloft

They spread themselves into the loveliness
  Of fan-like leaves; and over pallid flowers
Hang like moist clouds; or, where high branches kiss,

  Make a green space among the silent bowers
(Like a vast fane in a metropolis,
  Surrounded by the columns and the towers

All overwrought with branch-like traceries);
  In which there is religion, and the mute
Persuasion of unkindled melodies,

Odours, and gleams, and murmurs, which the lute
Of the blind Pilot-Spirit of the blast
Stirs as it sails, now grave and now acute,—

Wakening the leaves and waves, ere it has passed,
To such brief unison as on the brain
One tone which never can recur has cast,

One accent never to return again.

. . . . . .

The world is full of Woodmen who expel
Love's gentle Dryads from the haunts of life,
And vex the nightingales in every dell.

1818.

XXI.

O MIGHTY mind, in whose deep stream this age
Shakes like a reed in the unheeding storm,
Why dost thou curb not thine own sacred rage?

1818.

XXII.

SILENCE! Oh well are Death and Sleep and Thou
Three brethren named, the guardians gloomy-winged
Of one abyss, where life and truth and joy
Are swallowed up. Yet spare me, Spirit, pity me!
Until the sounds I hear become my soul,
And it has left these faint and weary limbs,
To track along the lapses of the air
This wandering melody until it rests
Among lone mountains in some . . . . .

1818.

XXIII.

THE fierce beasts of the woods and wildernesses
Track not the steps of him who drinks of it;
For the light breezes, which for ever fleet
Around its margin, heap the sand thereon.

1818.

XXIV.

MY head is wild with weeping for a grief
Which is the shadow of a gentle mind.

I walk into the air, (but no relief
To seek,—or haply, if I sought, to find;
It came unsought);—to wonder that a chief
Among men's spirits should be cold and blind.
1818.

XXV.

Flourishing vine, whose kindling clusters glow
Beneath the autumnal sun, none taste of thee;
For thou dost shroud a ruin, and below
The rotting bones of dead antiquity.
1818.

XXVI.

SCENE FROM TASSO.

MADDALO . . *a Courtier.* PIGNA . . *a Minister.*
MALPIGLIO . . *a Poet.* ALBANO . . *an Usher.*

Mad. No access to the Duke! You have not said
That the Count Maddalo would speak with him?
Pigna. Did you inform his Grace that Signor Pigna
Waits with state papers for his signature?
Mal. The Lady Leonora cannot know
That I have written a sonnet to her fame,
In which I . . . Venus and Adonis.
You should not take my gold, and serve me not.
Alb. In truth I told her; and she smiled and said,
"If I am Venus, thou, coy Poesy,
Art the Adonis whom I love, and he
The Erymanthian boar that wounded him."
Oh trust to me, Signor Malpiglio,
Those nods and smiles were favours worth the zechin.
Mal. The words are twisted in some double sense
That I reach not: the smiles fell not on me.
Pigna. How are the Duke and Duchess occupied?
Alb. Buried in some strange talk. The Duke was leaning—
His finger on his brow, his lips unclosed.
The Princess sate within the window-seat,
And so her face was hid; but on her knee
Her hands were clasped, veined, and pale as snow,
And quivering. Young Tasso, too, was there.
Mad. Thou seest on whom from thine own worshiped heaven
Thou draw'st down smiles—they did not rain on thee.

Mal. Would they were parching lightnings, for his sake
On whom they fell!

SONG FOR TASSO.

I LOVED—alas! our life is love;
But, when we cease to breathe and move,
I do suppose love ceases too.
I thought (but not as now I do)
Keen thoughts and bright of linkèd lore,—
Of all that men had thought before,
And all that Nature shows, and more.

And still I love, and still I think,
But strangely, for my heart can drink
The dregs of such despair, and live,
And love.
And, if I think, my thoughts come fast;
I mix the present with the past,
And each seems uglier than the last.

Sometimes I see before me flee
A silver spirit's form, like thee,
O Leonora! and I sit
. . . still watching it,
Till by the grated casement's ledge
It fades, with such a sigh as sedge
Breathes o'er the breezy streamlet's edge.

1818.

XXVII.

MARENGHI.

I.

LET those who pine in pride or in revenge,
Or think that ill for ill should be repaid,
Or barter wrong for wrong, until the exchange
Ruins the merchants of such thriftless trade,
Visit the tower of Vado, and unlearn
Such bitter faith beside Marenghi's urn.

II.

A massy tower yet overhangs the town,
A scattered group of ruined dwellings now.
. . . . . .

III.

Another scene ere wise Etruria knew
Its second ruin through internal strife,
And tyrants through the breach of discord threw
The chain which binds and kills. As death to life,
As winter to fair flowers (though some be poison)
So Monarchy succeeds to Freedom's foison.

IV.

In Pisa's church a cup of sculptured gold
Was brimming with the blood of feuds forsworn
At sacrament: more holy ne'er of old
Etrurians mingled with the shades forlorn
Of moon-illumined forests.

. . . . . .

V.

And reconciling factions wet their lips
With that dread wine, and swear to keep each spirit
Undarkened by their country's last eclipse.

. . . . . .

VI.

Was Florence the liberticide? that band
Of free and glorious brothers who had planted,
Like a green isle 'mid Ethiopian sand,
A nation amid slaveries, disenchanted
Of many impious faiths—wise, just—do they,
Does Florence, gorge the sated tyrants' prey?

VII.

O foster-nurse of man's abandoned glory
Since Athens, its great mother, sunk in splendour,
Thou shadowest forth that mighty shape in story,
As ocean its wrecked fanes, severe yet tender.
The light-invested angel Poesy
Was drawn from the dim world to welcome thee.

VIII.

And thou in painting didst transcribe all taught
By loftiest meditations; marble knew
The sculptor's fearless soul, and, as he wrought,
The grace of his own power and freedom grew.
And—more than all—heroic, just, sublime,
Thou wert among the false.—Was this thy crime?

IX.

Yes; and on Pisa's marble walls the twine
Of direst weeds hangs garlanded—the snake
Inhabits its wrecked palaces: in thine
A beast of subtler venom now doth make
Its lair, and sits amid their glories overthrown,
And thus thy victim's fate is as thine own.

X.

The sweetest flowers are ever frail and rare,
And love and freedom blossom but to wither;
And good and ill like vines entangled are,
So that their grapes may oft be plucked together;
Divide the vintage ere thou drink, then make
Thy heart rejoice for dead Marenghi's sake.

XI.

No record of his crime remains in story;
But, if the morning bright as evening shone,
It was some high and holy deed, by glory
Pursued into forgetfulness, which won
From the blind crowd he made secure and free
The patriot's meed, toil, death, and infamy.

XII.

For, when by sound of trumpet was declared
A price upon his life, and there was set
A penalty of blood on all who shared
So much of water with him as might wet
His lips, which speech divided not—he went
Alone, as you may guess, to banishment.

XIII.

Amid the mountains, like a hunted beast,
He hid himself, and hunger, toil, and cold,
Month after month endured; it was a feast
Whene'er he found those globes of deep-red gold
Which in the woods the strawberry-tree doth bear,
Suspended in their emerald atmosphere.

XIV.

And in the roofless huts of vast morasses,
Deserted by the fever-stricken serf,
All overgrown with reeds and long rank grasses,
And hillocks heaped of moss-inwoven turf,

And where the huge and speckled aloe made,
Rooted in stones, a broad and pointed shade,

XV.

He housed himself.—There is a point of strand
Near Vado's tower and town; and on one side
The treacherous marsh divides it from the land,
Shadowed by pine and ilex forests wide;
And on the other creeps eternally
Through muddy weeds the shallow sullen sea.

XVI.

Here the earth's breath is pestilence, and few
But things whose nature is at war with life—
Snakes and ill worms—endure its mortal dew.
The trophies of the clime's victorious strife—
White bones, and locks of dun and yellow hair,
And ringèd horns which buffaloes did wear—

. . . . . .

XVII.

And at the utmost point . . stood there
The relics of a weed-inwoven cot,
Thatched with broad flags. An outlawed murderer
Had lived seven days there: the pursuit was hot
When he was cold. The birds that were his grave
Fell dead upon their feast in Vado's wave.

XVIII.

There must have lived within Marenghi's heart
That fire, more warm and bright than life or hope,
(Which to the martyr makes his dungeon . .
More joyous than the heaven's majestic cope
To his oppressor), warring with decay,—
Or he could ne'er have lived years, day by day.

XIX.

Nor was his state so lone as you might think.
He had tamed every newt and snake and toad,
And every seagull which sailed down to drink
Those . . ere the death-mist went abroad.
And each one, with peculiar talk and play,
Wiled, not untaught, his silent time away,

XX.

And the marsh-meteors, like tame beasts, at night
Came licking with blue tongues his veinèd feet;
And he would watch them, as, like spirits bright,
In many entangled figures quaint and sweet,
To some enchanted music they would dance—
Until they vanished at the first moon-glance.

XXI.

He mocked the stars by grouping on each weed
The summer dewdrops in the golden dawn;
And, ere the hoar-frost vanished, he could read
Its pictured footprints, as on spots of lawn
Its delicate brief touch in silence weaves
The likeness of the wood's remembered leaves.

XXII.

And many a fresh Spring-morn would he awaken—
While yet the unrisen sun made glow, like iron
Quivering in crimson fire, the peaks unshaken
Of mountains and blue isles which did environ
With air-clad crags that plain of land and sea,—
And feel . . . liberty.

XXIII.

And in the moonless nights, when the dim ocean
Heaved underneath the heaven, . .
Starting from dreams . . .
Communed with the immeasurable world;
And felt his life beyond his limbs dilated,
Till his mind grew like that it contemplated.

XXIV.

His food was the wild fig and strawberry;
The milky pine-nuts which the autumnal blast
Shakes into the tall grass; and such small fry
As from the sea by winter-storms are cast;
And the coarse bulbs of iris-flowers he found
Knotted in clumps under the spongy ground.

XXV.

And so were kindled powers and thoughts which made
His solitude less dark. When memory came
(For years gone by leave each a deepening shade),
His spirit basked in it internal flame,—

As, when the black storm hurries round at night,
The fisher basks beside his red firelight.

XXVI.

Yet human hopes and cares and faiths and errors,
Like hollows unawakened by the wind,
Slept in Maremma still; but that all terrors,
Weakness, and doubt, had withered in his mind.
His couch

XXVII.

And, when he saw beneath the sunset's planet
A black ship walk over the crimson ocean,—
Its pennons streaming on the blasts that fan it,
Its sails and ropes all tense and without motion,
Like the dark ghost of the unburied even
Striding across the orange-coloured heaven,—

XXVIII.

The thought of his own kind who made the soul
Which sped that winged shape through night and day,—
The thought of his own country . . .

Naples, December 1818.

XXVIII.

Follow to the deep wood's weeds,
Follow to the wild briar dingle
Where we sink to intermingle,
And the violet tells her tale
To the colour-scented gale,—
For they two have enough to do
Of such work as I and you.

XXIX.

At the creation of the earth,
Pleasure, that divinest birth,
From the soil of heaven did rise,
Wrapped in sweet wild melodies,—
Like an exhalation wreathing
To the sound of air low breathing
Through Aeolian pines which make
A shrine to and shelter to the lake

Whence it rises soft and slow;
Her life-breathing [limbs] did flow
In the harmony divine
Of an ever-lengthening line
Which enwrapped her perfect form
With a beauty clear and warm.

1819.

XXX.

AND who feels discord now or sorrow?
Love is the universe to-day:
These are the slaves of dim to-morrow,
Darkening life's labyrinthine way.

XXXI.

A GENTLE story of two lovers young
Who met in innocence and died in sorrow,
And of one selfish heart whose rancour clung
Like curses on them. Are ye slow to borrow
The lore of truth from such a tale?
Or, in this world's deserted vale,
Do ye not see a star of gladness
Pierce the shadows of its sadness,
When ye are cold? that love is a light sent
From heaven, which none shall quench, to cheer the innocent?

XXXII.

I AM drunk with the honey wine
Of the moon-unfolded eglantine,
Which fairies catch in hyacinth bowls;
The bats, the dormice, and the moles,
Sleep in the walls, or under the sward
Of the desolate castle yard;
And, when 'tis spilt on the summer earth,
Or its fount arise among the dew,
Their joy and dreams are full of mirth;
They [wake] their joy to sleep; but [we]
Of the [earth] hear these [lays] in secrecy.

XXXIII.

YE gentle visitations of calm thought—
Moods like the memories of happier earth!
Which come arrayed in thoughts of little worth,
Like stars in clouds by the weak winds enwrought,—
But that the clouds depart and stars remain,
While they remain, and ye, alas, depart!

XXXIV.

THE world is dreary,
And I am weary
Of wandering on without thee, Mary;
A joy was erewhile
In thy voice and thy smile,
And 'tis gone, when I should be gone too, Mary.

1819.

XXXV.

TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.

THY little footsteps on the sands
Of a remote and lonely shore;
The twinkling of thine infant hands,
Where now the worm will feed no more:
Thy mingled look of love and glee
When we returned to gaze on thee.

1819.

XXXVI.

TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.

(With what truth I may say—
"Roma! Roma! Roma!
Non è piu come era prima!")

MY lost William, thou in whom
Some bright spirit lived, and did
That decaying robe consume
Which its lustre faintly hid!
Here its ashes find a tomb;
But beneath this pyramid
Thou art not;—if a thing divine
Like thee can die, thy funeral shrine
Is thy mother's grief and mine.

Where art thou, my gentle child?
Let me think thy spirit feeds,
With its life intense and mild,
The love of living leaves and weeds,
Among these tombs and ruin wild;—
Let me think that, through low seeds
Of the sweet flowers and sunny grass,
Into their hues and scents may pass
A portion . . . .

June 1819.

XXXVII.

My dearest Mary, wherefore hast thou gone,
And left me in this dreary world alone?
Thy form is here indeed—a lovely one—
But *thou* art fled, gone down the dreary road
That leads to Sorrow's most obscure abode;
Thou sittest on the hearth of pale Despair,
Where,
For thine own sake, I cannot follow thee.

1819.

XXXVIII.

When a lover clasps his fairest,
Then be our dread sport the rarest.
Their caresses were like the chaff
In the tempest, and be our laugh
His despair—her epitaph!

When a mother clasps her child,
Watch till dusty Death has piled
His cold ashes on the clay;
She has loved it many a day—
She remains,—it fades away.

XXXIX.

One sung of thee who left the tale untold,
Like the false dawns which perish in the
Like empty cups of wrought and daedal gol
Which mock the lips with air when they

XL.

AND where is truth? On tombs? for such to thee
Has been my heart—and thy dead memory
Has lain from childhood, many a changeful year,
Unchangingly preserved and buried there.

XLI.

IN the cave which wild weeds cover
Wait for thine etherial lover;
For the pallid moon is waning,
O'er the spiral cypress hanging,
And the moon no cloud is staining.

It was once a Roman's chamber,
Where he kept his darkest revels,
And the wild weeds twine and clamber;
It was then a chasm for devils.

XLII.

THERE is a warm and gentle atmosphere
About the form of one we love, and thus,
As in a tender mist, our spirits are
Wrapped in the . . . of that which is to us
The health of life's own life.

XLIII.

HOW sweet it is to sit and read the tales
Of mighty poets, and to hear the while
Sweet music, which, when the attention fails,
Fills the dim pause!

XLIV.

WHAT men gain fairly—*that* they should possess;
And children may inherit idleness
From him who earns it. This is understood;
Private injustice may be general good.
But he who gains by base and armèd wrong,
Or guilty fraud, or base compliances,
May be despoiled; even as a stolen dress
Is stripped from a convicted thief, and he
Left in the nakedness of infamy.

XLV.

WAKE the serpent not—lest he
Should not know the way to go.
Let him crawl, which yet lies sleeping,
Through the deep grass of the meadow.
Not a bee shall hear him creeping;
Not a May-fly shall awaken,
From its cradling blue-bell shaken;
Not the starlight, as he's sliding
Through the grass with silent gliding.

XLVI.

ROME has fallen, ye see it lying
Heaped in undistinguished ruin:
Nature is alone undying.

XLVII.

THE fitful alternations of the rain,
When the chill wind, languid as with pain
Of its own heavy moisture, here and there
Drives through the grey and beamless atmosphere.

XLVIII.

ON THE MEDUSA OF LEONARDO DA VINCI, IN THE FLORENTINE GALLERY.

I.

IT lieth, gazing on the midnight sky,
Upon the cloudy mountain peak supine;
Below, far lands are seen tremblingly;
Its horror and its beauty are divine.
Upon its lips and eyelids seems to lie
Loveliness like a shadow, from which shine,
Fiery and lurid, struggling underneath,
The agonies of anguish and of death.

II.

Yet it is less the horror than the grace
Which turns the gazer's spirit into stone,
Whereon the lineaments of that dead face
Are graven, till the characters be grown

Into itself, and thought no more can trace;
'Tis the melodious hues of beauty, thrown
Athwart the darkness and the glare of pain,
Which humanize and harmonize the strain.

And from its head as from one body grow,
As . . . grass out of a watery rock,
Hairs which are vipers; and they curl and flow,
And their long tangles in each other lock,
And with unending involutions show
Their mailèd radiance, as it were to mock
The torture and the death within, and saw
The solid air with many a ragged jaw.

III.

And, from a stone beside, a poisonous eft
Peeps idly into these Gorgonian eyes;
Whilst in the air a ghastly bat, bereft
Of sense, has flitted with a mad surprise
Out of the cave this hideous light hath cleft,
And he comes hastening like a moth that hies
After a taper; and the midnight sky
Flares, a light more dread than obscurity.

IV.

'Tis the tempestuous loveliness of terror;
For from the serpents gleams a brazen glare
Kindled by that inextricable error,
Which makes a thrilling vapour of the air
Become a . . . and ever-shifting mirror
Of all the beauty and the terror there—
A woman's countenance, with serpent locks,
Gazing in death on heaven from those wet rocks.

Florence, 1819.

XLIX.

PEOPLE of England! ye who toil and groan,
Who reap the harvests which are not your own,
Who weave the clothes which your oppressors wear,
And for your own take the inclement air;
Who build warm houses . . .
And are like gods who give them all they have,
And nurse them from the cradle to the grave!

1819.

L.

I AM as a spirit who has dwelt
Within his heart of hearts; and I have felt
His feelings, and have thought his thoughts, and known
The inmost converse of his soul, the tone
Unheard but in the silence of his blood,
When all the pulses in their multitude
Image the trembling calm of summer seas.
I have unlocked the golden melodies
Of his deep soul as with a master-key,
And loosened them, and bathed myself therein—
Even as an eagle in a thunder-mist
Clothing his wings with lightning.

1819.

LI.

Is not to-day enough? Why do I peer
Into the darkness of the day to come?
Is not to-morrow even as yesterday,
And will the day that follows change thy doom?
Few flowers grow upon thy wintry way;
And who waits for thee in that cheerless home
Whence thou hast fled, whither thou must return
Charged with the load that makes thee faint and mourn?

1819.

LII.

Is it that in some brighter sphere
We part from friends we meet with here?
Or do we see the Future pass
Over the Present's dusky glass?
Or what is it that makes us seem
To patch up fragments of a dream,
Part of which comes true, and part
Beats and trembles in the heart?

1819.

LIII.

As the sunrise to the night,
As the north wind to the clouds,

As the earthquake's fiery flight
Ruining mountain solitudes,
Everlasting Italy,
Be those hopes and fears on thee!

1819.

LIV.

Such hope as is the sick despair of good,
Such fear as is the certainty of ill,
Such doubt as is pale Expectation's food,
Turned while she tastes to poison, when the will
Is powerless, and the spirit

1820.

LV.

My head is heavy, my limbs are weary,
And it is not life that makes me move.

1820.

LVI.

A VISION OF THE SEA.

'Tis the terror of tempest. The rags of the sail
Are flickering in ribbons within the fierce gale.
From the stark night of vapours the dim rain is driven;
And, when lightning is loosed, like a deluge from heaven,
She sees the black trunks of the waterspouts spin
And bend, as if heaven was ruining in,
Which they seemed to sustain with their terrible mass.
As if ocean had sunk from beneath them, they pass
To their graves in the deep with an earthquake of sound;
And the waves and the thunders, made silent around,
Leave the wind to its echo. The vessel, now tossed
Through the low-trailing rack of the tempest, is lost
In the skirts of the thunder-cloud. Now down the sweep
Of the wind-cloven wave to the chasm of the deep
It sinks, and the walls of the watery vale
Whose depths of dread calm are unmoved by the gale,
Dim mirrors of ruin, hang gleaming about;
While the surf, like a chaos of stars, like a rout
Of death-flames, like whirlpools of fire-flowing iron,
With splendour and terror the black ship environ;
Or, like sulphur-flakes hurled from a mine of pale fire,

In fountains spout o'er it. In many a spire
The pyramid-billows, with white points of brine,
In the cope of the lightning inconstantly shine,
As piercing the sky from the floor of the sea.

The great ships seems splitting! it cracks as a tree
While an earthquake is splintering its root, ere the blast.
Of the whirlwind that stripped it of branches has passed.
The intense thunder-balls which are raining from heaven
Have shattered its mast, and it stands black and riven.
The chinks suck destruction. The heavy dead hulk
On the living sea rolls an inanimate bulk,
Like a corpse on the clay which is hungering to fold
Its corruption around it. Meanwhile, from the hold,
One deck is burst up from the waters below,
And it splits like the ice when the thaw-breezes blow
O'er the lakes of the desert. Who sit on the other?
Is that all the crew that lie burying each other,
Like the dead in a breach, round the foremast? are those
Twin tigers—who burst, when the waters arose,
In the agony of terror, their chains in the hold
(What now makes them tame is what then made them bold),
Who crouch side by side, and have driven like a crank
The deep grip of their claws through the vibrating plank—
Are these all?

Nine weeks the tall vessel had lain
On the windless expanse of the watery plain,
Where the death-darting sun cast no shadow at noon,
And there seemed to be fire in the beams of the moon;
Till a lead-coloured fog gathered up from the deep,
Whose breath was quick pestilence. Then the cold sleep
Crept, like blight through the ears of a thick field of corn,
O'er the populous vessel. And even and morn,
With their hammocks for coffins, the seamen aghast
Like dead men the dead limbs of their comrades cast
Down the deep, which closed on them above and around;
And the sharks and the dogfish their grave-clothes unbound,
And were glutted like Jews with this manna rained down
From God on their wilderness. One after one
The mariners died; on the eve of this day,
When the tempest was gathering in cloudy array,
But seven remained. Six the thunder has smitten,

And they lie black as mummies on which Time has written
His scorn of the embalmer; the seventh, from the deck
An oak splinter pierced through his breast and his back,
And hung out to the tempest, a wreck on the wreck.

No more? At the helm sits a woman, more fair
Than heaven when, unbinding its star-braided hair,
It sinks with the sun on the earth and the sea.
She clasps a bright child on her upgathered knee.
It laughs at the lightning, it mocks the mixed thunder
Of the air and the sea; with desire and with wonder
It is beckoning the tigers to rise and come near,—
It would play with those eyes where the radiance of fear
Is outshining the meteors. Its bosom beats high;
The heart-fire of pleasure has kindled its eye,
Whilst its mother's is lustreless. "Smile not, my child,
But sleep deeply and sweetly, and so be beguiled
Of the pang that awaits us, whatever that be,—
So dreadful since thou must divide it with me!
Dream, sleep! This pale bosom, thy cradle and bed,
Will it rock thee not, infant? 'Tis beating with dread!
Alas! what is life, what is death, what are we,
That when the ship sinks we no longer may be?
What! to see thee no more, and to feel thee no more?
To be after life what we have been before?
Not to touch those sweet hands, not to look on those eyes,
Those lips, and that hair, all that smiling disguise
Thou yet wearest, sweet spirit,—which I, day by day,
Have so long called my child, but which now fades away
Like a rainbow, and I the fallen shower?"
Lo! the ship
Is settling, it topples, the leeward ports dip.
The tigers leap up when they feel the slow brine
Crawling inch by inch on them; hair, ears, limbs, and eyne,
Stand rigid with horror. A loud, long, hoarse cry
Bursts at once from their vitals tremendously;
And 'tis borne down the mountainous vale of the wave,
Rebounding, like thunder from crag to cave,
Mixed with the clash of the lashing rain,
Hurried on by the might of the hurricane.
The hurricane came from the west, and passed on
By the path of the gate of the eastern sun,

Transversely dividing the stream of the storm;
As an arrowy serpent, pursuing the form
Of an elephant, bursts through the brakes of the waste.
Black as a cormorant, the screaming blast
Between ocean and heaven like an ocean passed,
Till it came to the clouds on the verge of the world,
Which, based on the sea and to heaven upcurled,
Like columns and walls did surround and sustain
The dome of the tempest. It rent them in twain,
As a flood rends its barriers of mountainous crag;
And the dense clouds in many a ruin and rag,
Like the stones of a temple ere earthquake has passed,
Like the dust of its fall, on the whirlwind are cast.
They are scattered like foam on the torrent; and, where
The wind has burst out through the chasm, from the air
Of clear morning, the beams of the sunrise flow in,
Unimpeded, keen, golden, and crystalline,
Banded armies of light and of air; at one gate
They encounter, but interpenetrate.
And that breach in the tempest is widening away;
And the caverns of cloud are torn up by the day;
And the fierce winds are sinking with weary wings,
Lulled by the motion and murmurings,
And the long glassy heave of the rocking sea;
And overhead, glorious but dreadful to see,
The wrecks of the tempest, like vapours of gold,
Are consuming in sunrise. The heaped waves behold
The deep calm of blue heaven dilating above;
And, like passions made still by the presence of Love,
Beneath the clear surface, reflecting it, slide
Tremulous with soft influence. Extending its tide
From the Andes to Atlas, round mountain and isle,
Round sea-birds and wrecks, paved with heaven's azure smile,
The wide world of waters is vibrating.

Where
Is the ship? On the verge of the wave where it lay,
One tiger is mingled in ghastly affray
With a sea-snake. The foam and the smoke of the battle
Stain the clear air with sunbows. The jar and the rattle
Of solid bones crushed by the infinite stress,
Of the snake's adamantine voluminousness;

And the hum of the hot blood that spouts and rains
Where the gripe of the tiger has wounded the veins
Swoln with rage, strength, and effort; the whirl and the splash,
As of some hideous engine whose brazen teeth smash
The thin winds and soft waves into thunder; the screams
And hissings—crawl fast o'er the smooth ocean-streams,
Each sound like a centipede. Near this commotion,
A blue shark is hanging within the blue ocean,
The fin-winged tomb of the victor. The other
Is winning his way, from the fate of his brother,
To his own with the speed of despair.
Lo! a boat
Advances; twelve rowers with the impulse of thought
Urge on the keen keel, the brine foams. At the stern
Three marksmen stand levelling. Hot bullets burn
In the breast of the tiger, which yet bears him on
To his refuge and ruin. One fragment alone
('Tis dwindling and sinking, 'tis now almost gone)
Of the wreck of the vessel peers out of the sea.
With her left hand she grasps it impetuously,
With her right she sustains her fair infant. Death, fear,
Love, beauty, are mixed in the atmosphere,
Which trembles and burns with the fervour of dread
Around her wild eyes, her bright hand, and her head,
Like a meteor of light o'er the waters. Her child
Is yet smiling and playing and murmuring; so smiled
The false deep ere the storm. Like a sister and brother,
The child and the ocean still smile on each other,
Whilst ———

1820.

LVII.

THE WANING MOON.

And, like a dying lady lean and pale,
Who totters forth, wrapped in a gauzy veil,
Out of her chamber, led by the insane
And feeble wanderings of her fading brain,
The moon arose up in the murky east
A white and shapeless mass.

1820.

LVIII.

DEATH.

I.

DEATH is here, and death is there,
Death is busy everywhere;
All around, within, beneath,
Above, is death—and we are death.

II.

Death has set his mark and seal
On all we are and all we feel,
On all we know and all we fear,

. . . .

III.

First our pleasures die, and then
Our hopes, and then our fears: and, when
These are dead, the debt is due,
Dust claims dust—and we die too.

IV.

All things that we love and cherish,
Like ourselves, must fade and perish.
Such is our rude mortal lôt:
Love itself would, did they not.

1820.

LIX.

THE WORLD'S WANDERERS.

TELL me, thou star, whose wings of light
Speed thee in thy fiery flight,
In what cavern of the night
Will thy pinions close now?

Tell me, moon, thou pale and grey
Pilgrim of heaven's homeless way,
In what depth of night or day
Seekest thou repose now?

Weary wind, who wanderest
Like the world's rejected guest,
Hast thou still some secret nest
On the tree or billow?

1820.

LX.

ORPHEUS.

A.

NOT far from hence. From yonder pointed hill
Crowned with a ring of oaks, you may behold
A dark and barren field through which there flows,
Sluggish and black, a deep but narrow stream,
Which the wind ripples not, and the fair moon
Gazes in vain and finds no mirror there.
Follow the herbless banks of that strange brook
Until you pause beside a darksome pond,
The fountain of this rivulet, whose gush
Cannot be seen, hid by a rayless night
That lives beneath the overhanging rock
That shades the pool—an endless spring of gloom,
Upon whose edge hovers the tender light,
Trembling to mingle with its paramour,—
But, as Syrinx fled Pan, so Night flies Day,
Or, with most sullen and regardless hate,
Refuses stern her heaven-born embrace.
On one side of this jagged and shapeless hill
There is a cave, from which there eddies up
A pale mist, like aërial gossamer,
Whose breath destroys all life: awhile it veils
The rock—then, scattered by the wind, it flies
Along the stream, or lingers on the clefts,
Killing the sleepy worms, if aught bide there.
Upon the beetling edge of that dark rock
There stands a group of cypresses; not such
As, with a graceful spire and stirring life,
Pierce the pure heaven of your native vale,
Whose branches the air plays among, but not
Disturbs, fearing to spoil their solemn grace;
But blasted and all wearily they stand,
One to another clinging; their weak boughs
Sigh as the wind buffets them, and they shake
Beneath its blasts—a weather-beaten crew.

CHORUS.

What wondrous sound is that, mournful and faint,
But more melodious than the murmuring wind
Which through the columns of a temple glides?

A.

It is the wandering voice of Orpheus' lyre,
Borne by the Winds, who sigh that their rude King
Hurries them fast from these air-feeding notes;
But in their speed they bear along with them
The waning sound, scattering it like dew
Upon the startled sense.

CHORUS.

Does he still sing?
Methought he rashly cast away his harp
When he had lost Eurydice.

A.

Ah no!
Awhile he paused.—As a poor hunted stag
A moment shudders on the fearful brink
Of a swift stream—the cruel hounds press on
With deafening yell, the arrows glance and wound,—
He plunges in: so Orpheus, seized and torn
By the sharp fangs of an insatiate grief,
Mænad-like waved his lyre in the bright air,
And wildly shrieked "Where she is, it is dark!"
And then he struck from forth the strings a sound
Of deep and fearful melody. Alas!
In times long past, when fair Eurydice
With her bright eyes sat listening by his side,
He gently sang of high and heavenly themes.
As, in a brook fretted with little waves
By the light airs of Spring, each riplet makes
A many-sided mirror for the sun,
While it flows musically through green banks,
Ceaseless and pauseless, ever clear and fresh;
So flowed his song, reflecting the deep joy
And tender love that fed those sweetest notes,
The heavenly offspring of ambrosial food.
But that is past. Returning from drear Hell,
He chose a lonely seat of unhewn stone,
Blackened with lichens, on a herbless plain.
Then from the deep and overflowing spring
Of his eternal ever-moving grief
There rose to heaven a sound of angry song.
'Tis as a mighty cataract that parts

Two sister rocks with waters swift and strong,
And casts itself with horrid roar and din
Adown a steep; from a perennial source
It ever flows and falls, and breaks the air
With loud and fierce but most harmonious roar,
And as it falls casts up a vaporous spray
Which the sun clothes in hues of Iris light.
Thus the tempestuous torrent of his grief
Is clothed in sweetest sounds and varying words
Of poesy. Unlike all human works,
It never slackens, and through every change
Wisdom and beauty and a power divine
And mighty poesy together dwell,
Mingling in sweet accord. As I have seen
A fierce South Blast tear through the darkened sky,
Driving along a rack of wingèd Clouds,
Which may not pause, but ever hurry on
As their wild Shepherd wills them, while the Stars,
Twinkling and dim, peep from between the plumes:
Anon the sky is cleared, and the high dome
Of serene heaven, starred with fiery flowers,
Shuts-in the shaken earth, or the still Moon
Swiftly yet gracefully begins her walk,
Rising all bright behind the eastern hills.
I talk of moon and wind and stars, and not
Of song; but, would I echo his high song,
Nature must lend me words ne'er used before,
Or I must borrow from her perfect works
To picture forth its perfect attributes.
He does no longer sit upon his throne
Of rock upon a desert herbless plain;
For the evergreen and knotted ilexes,
And cypresses who seldom wave their boughs,
And sea-green olives with their grateful fruit,
And elms dragging along the twisted vines
Which drop their berries as they follow fast,
And blackthorn bushes with their infant race
Of blushing rose-blooms, beeches to lovers dear,
And weeping willow-trees,—all swift or slow
As their huge boughs or lighter dress permit—
Have circled-in his throne; and Earth herself
Has sent from her maternal breast a growth

Of starlike flowers and herbs of odours sweet,
To pave the temple that his poesy
Has framed, while near his feet grim lions couch,
And kids, fearless from love, creep near his lair.
Even the blind worms seem to feel the sound.
The birds are silent, hanging down their heads,
Perched on the lowest branches of the trees:
Not even the nightingale intrudes a note
In rivalry, but all entranced she listens.

1820.

LXI.

TO HIS GENIUS.

HERE, my dear friend, is a new book for you.
I have already dedicated two
To other friends, one female and one male.
What you are is a thing that I must veil;
What can this be to those who praise or rail?

. . . . . .

Free love has this, different from gold and clay,
That to divide is not to take away:—
Like ocean, which the general north wind breaks
Into ten thousand waves, and each one makes
A mirror of the moon, like some great glass,
Which did distort whatever form might pass,
Dashed into fragments by a playful child,
Which then reflects its eyes and forehead mild,—
Giving for one, which it could ne'er express,
A thousand images of loveliness.

If I were one whom the loud world held wise,
I should disdain to quote authorities
In commendation of this kind of love.
Why, there is first the God in heaven above,
Who wrote a book called Nature ('tis to be
Reviewed, I hear, in the next *Quarterly*),
And Socrates, the Jesus Christ of Greece;
And Jesus Christ himself did never cease
To urge all living things to love each other,
And to forgive their mutual faults, and smother
The devil of disunion in their souls.

. . . . . .

I love you!—Listen, O embodied Ray
Of the great Brightness; I must pass away
While you remain, and these light words must be
Tokens by which you may remember me.
Start not—the thing you are is unbetrayed,
If you are human, and if but the shade
Of some sublimer Spirit.

. . . . . .

And as to friend or mistress, 'tis a form;
Perhaps I wish you were one. Some declare
You a familiar spirit, as you are;
Others, with a . . . more inhuman,
Hint that, though not my wife, you are a woman,—
"What is the colour of your eyes and hair?"
Why, if you were a lady, it were fair
The world should know—but, as I am afraid,
The *Quarterly* would bait you if betrayed;
And if, as it will be sport to see them stumble
Over all sorts of scandals, hear them mumble
Their litany of curses . . . Some guess right;
And others swear you're a Hermaphrodite,
Like that sweet marble monster of both sexes,
With looks so sweet and gentle that it vexes
The very soul that the soul is gone
Which lifted from her limbs the veil of stone.

. . . . . .

It is a sweet thing, friendship; a dear balm,
A happy and auspicious bird of calm
Which rides o'er life's ever tumultuous ocean,
A God that broods o'er chaos in commotion,
A flower which, fresh as Lapland roses are,
Lifts its bold head into the world's frore air,
And blooms most radiantly when others die—
Health, hope, and youth, and brief prosperity—
And with the light and odour of its bloom
Shining within the dungeon and the tomb.

. . . . . .

If I had but a friend! Why, I have three,
Even by my own confession! There may be

Some more, for what I know; for 'tis my mind
To call my friends all who are wise and kind,—
And these, Heaven knows, at best are very few.
But none can ever be more dear than you,—
Why should they be? My Muse has lost her wings;
Or, like a dying swan who soars and sings,
I should describe you in heroic style.
But, as it is, are you not void of guile?
A lovely soul, formed to be blessed and bless;
A well of sealed and secret happiness;
A lute which those whom Love has taught to play
Make music on to cheer the roughest day,
And enchant sadness till it sleeps?

. . . . .

To the oblivion whither I and thou,
All loving and all lovely, hasten now
With steps ah too unequal! May we meet
In one Elysium or one winding-sheet!

If any should be curious to discover
Whether to you I am a friend or lover,
Let them read Shakspeare's sonnets, taking thence
A whetstone for their dull intelligence
That tears and will not cut; or let them guess
How Diotima, the wise prophetess,
Instructed the instructor, and why he
Rebuked the infant spirit of melody
On Agathon's sweet lips, which, as he spoke,
Was as the lovely star when morn has broke
The roof of darkness, in the golden dawn
Half-hidden and yet beautiful.
I'll pawn
My hopes of heaven—you know what they are worth—
That the presumptuous pedagogues of earth,
If they could tell the riddle offered here,
Would scorn to be, or, being, to appear,
What now they seem and are. But let them chide!
They have few pleasures in the world beside.
Perhaps we should be dull were we not chidden;
Paradise fruits are sweetest when forbidden,—
Folly can season wisdom, hatred love.

. . . . . .

Farewell, if it can be to say farewell
To those who—

. . . . . .

I will not, as most dedicators do,
Assure myself and all the world and you
That you are faultless. Would to God they were
Who taunt me with your love! (I then should wear
These heavy chains of life with a light spirit)—
And would to God I were, or even as near it
As you, dear heart! Alas! what are we? Clouds
Driven by the wind in warring multitudes;
Which rain into the bosom of the earth,
And rise again, and in our death and birth,
And through our restless life, take as from heaven
Hues which are not our own, but which are given,
And then withdrawn, and with inconstant glance
Flash from the spirit to the countenance.
There is a Power, a Love, a Joy, a God,
Which makes in mortal hearts its brief abode;
A Pythian exhalation, which inspires
Love, only love; a wind which o'er the wires
Of the soul's giant harp. . . .
There is a mood which language faints beneath;
You feel it striding, as almighty Death
His bloodless steed.

1820.

LXII.

FIORDISPINA.

THE season was the childhood of sweet June,
Whose sunny hours from morning until noon
Went creeping through the day with silent feet,
Each with its load of pleasure, slow yet sweet;
Like the long years of blessed eternity,
Never to be developed. Joy to thee,
Fiordispina, and thy Cosimo!
For thou the wonders of the depth canst know
Of this unfathomable flood of hours,
Sparkling beneath the heaven which embowers

. . . . . .

They were two cousins, almost like two twins,
Except that from the catalogue of sins

Nature had rased their love, which could not be
But by dissevering their nativity.
And so they grew together like two flowers
Upon one stem, which the same beams and showers
Lull or awaken in their purple prime,
Which the same hand will gather, the same clime
Shake with decay. This fair day smiles to see
All those who love—and who e'er loved like thee,
Fiordispina? Scarcely Cosimo,
Within whose bosom and whose brain now glow
The ardours of a vision which obscure
The very idol of its portraiture.
He faints, dissolved into a sea of love.
But thou art as a planet sphered above;
But thou art Love itself—ruling the motion
Of his subjected spirit: such emotion
Must end in sin or sorrow, if sweet May
Had not brought forth this morn, your wedding-day.

. . . . .

"Lie there; sleep awhile in your own dew,
Ye faint-eyed children of the . . . Hours,"
Fiordispina said, and threw the flowers
Which she had from the breathing . . .

. . . .

A table near of polished porphyry.
They seemed to wear a beauty from the eye
That looked on them; a fragrance from the touch
Whose warmth . . . checked their life; a light such
As sleepers wear, lulled by the voice they love,

. . . which did reprove
The childish pity that she felt for them.
And a . . remorse that from their stem
She had divided such fair shapes . . made
A feeling in the . . . which was a shade
Of gentle beauty on the flowers. There lay
All gems that make the earth's dark bosom gay:—
. . rods of myrtle-buds and lemon-blooms,
And that leaf tinted lightly which assumes
The livery of unremembered snow—
Violets whose eyes have drunk—

. . . . .

Fiordispina and her nurse are now

Upon the steps of the high portico;
Under the withered arm of Media
She flings her glowing arm.

. . . . .

. . step by step and stair by stair,
That withered woman, grey and white and brown—
More like a trunk by lichens overgrown
Than anything which once could have been human.
And ever as she goes the palsied woman

. . . . .

"How slow and painfully you seem to walk,
Poor Media! you tire yourself with talk."
. . . . "And well it may,
Fiordispina, dearest! Well-a-day!
You are hastening to a marriage-bed;
I to the grave!"—"And, if my love were dead,
Unless my heart deceives me, I would lie
Beside him in my shroud as willingly
As now in the gay night-dress Lilla wrought."
"Fie, child! Let that unseasonable thought
Not be remembered till it snows in June;
Such fancies are a music out of tune
With the sweet dance your heart must keep to-night.
What! would you take all beauty and delight
Back to the paradise from which you sprung,
And leave to grosser mortals?——
And say, sweet lamb, would you not learn the sweet
And subtle mystery by which spirits meet?
Who knows whether the loving game is played
When, once of mortal vesture disarrayed,
The naked soul goes wandering here and there
Through the wide deserts of elysian air?
The violet dies not till it" . . .

1820.

LXIII.

TO THE MOON.

ART thou pale for weariness
Of climbing heaven, and gazing on the earth,—
Wandering companionless
Among the stars that have a different birth,—

And ever changing, like a joyless eye
That finds no object worth its constancy?
Thou chosen sister of the spirit,
That gazes on thee till in thee it pities . . .

1820.

LXIV.

UNRISEN splendour of the brightest sun,
To rise upon our darkness, if the star
Now beckoning thee out of thy misty throne
Could thaw the clouds which wage an obscure war
With thy young brightness!

1820.

LXV.

AN ALLEGORY.

A PORTAL as of shadowy adamant
Stands yawning on the highway of the life
Which we all tread, a cavern huge and gaunt.
Around it rages an unceasing strife
Of shadows, like the restless clouds that haunt
The gap of some cleft mountain, lifted high
Into the whirlwinds of the upper sky.

And many pass it by with careless tread,
Not knowing that a shadowy . . .
Tracks every traveller even to where the dead
Wait peacefully for their companion new.
But others, by more curious humour led,
Pause to examine: these are very few,
And they learn little there, except to know
That shadows follow them where'er they go.

1820.

LXVI.

I WENT into the deserts of dim sleep—
That world which, like an unknown wilderness,
Bounds this with its recesses wide and deep.

LXVII.

THE viewless and invisible Consequence
Watches thy goings-out and comings-in,

And . . hovers o'er thy guilty sleep,
Unveiling every new-born deed, and thoughts
More ghastly than those deeds.

LXVIII.

I DREAMED that Milton's spirit rose, and took
From life's green tree his Uranian lute;
And from his touch sweet thunder flowed, and shook
All human things built in contempt of man,—
And sanguine thrones and impious altars quaked,
Prisons and citadels.

LXIX.

HIS face was like a snake's—wrinkled and loose
And withered.

LXX.

THE gentleness of rain was in the wind.

LXXI.

METHOUGHT I was a billow in the crowd
Of common men, that stream without a shore,
That ocean which at once is deaf and loud;
That I, a man, stood amid many more
By a wayside . . , which the aspect bore
Of some imperial metropolis,
Where mighty shapes—pyramid, dome, and tower—
Gleamed like a pile of crags.

1821.

LXXII.

LOVE, HOPE, DESIRE, AND FEAR.

. . . . .

AND many there were hurt by that strong boy;
His name, they said, was Pleasure.
And near him stood, glorious beyond measure,
Four Ladies who possess all empery
In earth and air and sea:
Nothing that lives from their award is free.
Their names will I declare to thee,—

Love, Hope, Desire and Fear;
And they the regents are
Of the four elements that frame the heart,—
And each diversely exercised her art,
By force or circumstance or sleight,
To prove her dreadful might
Upon that poor domain.
Desire presented her [false] glass; and then
The spirit dwelling there
Was spellbound to embrace what seemed so fair
Within that magic mirror.
And, dazed by that bright error,
It would have scorned the [shafts] of the avenger,
And death and penitence and danger,
Had not then silent Fear
Touched with her palsying spear,—
So that, as if a frozen torrent,
The blood was curdled in its current;
It dared not speak, even in look or motion,
But chained within itself its proud devotion.
Between Desire and Fear thou wert
A wretched thing, poor heart!
Sad was his life who bore thee in his breast,
Wild bird for that weak nest.
Till Love even from fierce Desire it bought,
And from the very wound of tender thought
Drew solace, and the pity of sweet eyes
Gave strength to bear those gentle agonies,
Surmount the loss, the terror, and the sorrow.
Then Hope approached, she who can borrow,
For poor To-day, from rich To-morrow;
And Fear withdrew, as night when day
Descends upon the orient ray.
And after long and vain endurance
The poor heart woke to her assurance.
—At one birth these four were born
With the world's forgotten morn,
And from Pleasure still they hold
All it circles, as of old.
When, as summer lures the swallow,
Pleasure lures the heart to follow
(O weak heart of little wit!)

The fair hand that wounded it,
Seeking, like a panting hare,
Refuge in the lynx's lair,—
Love, Desire, Hope, and Fear,
Ever will be near.

1821.

LXXIII.

PROLOGUE TO HELLAS.

HERALD OF ETERNITY.

IT is the day when all the Sons of God
Wait in the roofless senate-house whose floor
Is chaos and the immovable abyss
Frozen by his steadfast word to hyaline.
. . . . . .
The shadow of God, and delegate
Of that before whose breath the universe
Is as a print of dew.
Hierarchs and kings,
Who from your thrones pinnacled on the past
Sway the reluctant present, ye who sit
Pavilioned on the radiance or the gloom
Of mortal thought, which, like an exhalation
Steaming from earth, conceals the . . of heaven
Which gave it birth, . . . assemble here
Before your Father's throne. The swift decree
Yet hovers, and the fiery incarnation
Is yet withheld, clothed in which it shall
. . . . annul
The fairest of those wandering isles that gem
The sapphire space of interstellar air,—
That green and azure sphere, that earth enwrapped
Less in the beauty of its tender light
Than in an atmosphere of living spirit
Which interpenetrating all the . . .
. . . it rolls from realm to realm
And age to age, and in its ebb and flow
Impels the generations
To their appointed place,
Whilst the high Arbiter
Beholds the strife, and at the appointed time
Sends his decrees veiled in eternal . . .

Within the circuit of this pendent orb
There lies an antique region, on which fell
The dews of thought, in the world's golden dawn,
Earliest and most benign; and from it sprung
Temples and cities and immortal forms,
And harmonies of wisdom and of song,
And thoughts, and deeds worthy of thoughts so fair.
And, when the sun of its dominion failed,
And when the winter of its glory came,
The winds that stripped it bare blew on, and swept
That dew into the utmost wildernesses
In wandering clouds of sunny rain that thawed
The unmaternal bosom of the North.
Haste, Sons of God, . . for ye beheld,
Reluctant or consenting or astonished,
The stern decrees go forth which heaped on Greece
Ruin and degradation and despair.
A fourth now waits. Assemble, Sons of God,
To speed or to prevent or to suspend
(If, as ye dream, such power be not withheld)
The unaccomplished destiny.

. . . . .

CHORUS.

The curtain of the universe
Is rent and shattered,
The splendour-winged worlds disperse
Like wild doves scattered.

Space is roofless and bare,
And in the midst a cloudy shrine,
Dark amid thrones of light.
In the blue glow of hyaline
Golden worlds revolve and shine.
In . . . flight
From every point of the Infinite,
Like a thousand dawns on a single night
The splendours rise and spread.
And through thunder and darkness dread
Light and music are radiated,
And, in their pavilioned chariots led
By living wings, high overhead
The giant Powers move,
Gloomy or bright as the thrones they fill.

. . . . .

A chaos of light and motion
Upon that glassy ocean.

. . . . .

The senate of the Gods is met,
Each in his rank and station set;
There is silence in the spaces—
Lo! Satan, Christ, and Mahomet,
Start from their places!

. . . . .

CHRIST.

Almighty Father!
Low-kneeling at the feet of Destiny

. . . . .

There are two fountains in which spirits weep
When mortals err, Discord and Slavery named;
And with their bitter dew two Destinies
Filled each their irrevocable urns. The third,
Fiercest and mightiest, mingled both, and added
Chaos and death, and slow oblivion's lymph,
And hate and terror, and the poisoned rain

. . . . .

The Aurora of the nations. By this brow
Whose pores wept tears of blood; by these wide wounds;
By this imperial crown of agony;
By infamy and solitude and death,
(For this I underwent); and by the pain
Of pity for those who would . . for me
The unremembered joy of a revenge,
(For this I felt); by Plato's sacred light,
Of which my spirit was a burning morrow;
By Greece, and all she cannot cease to be,
Her quenchless words, sparks of immortal truth,
Stars of all night—her harmonies and forms,
Echoes and shadows of what Love adores
In thee; I do compel thee, send forth Fate,
Thy irrevocable child! Let her descend,
A seraph-winged victory [arrayed]
In tempest of the omnipotence of God
Which sweeps through all things.

From hollow leagues, from Tyranny which arms
Adverse miscreeds and emulous anarchies
To stamp, as on a winged serpent's seed,
Upon the name of Freedom; from the storm
Of faction, which like earthquakes shakes and sickens
The solid heart of enterprise; from all
By which the holiest dreams of highest spirits
Are stars beneath the dawn . .

. . . . She shall arise
Victorious as the world arose from chaos!
And, as the heavens and the earth arrayed
Their presence in the beauty and the light
Of thy first smile, O Father; as they gather
The spirit of thy love, which paves for them
Their path o'er the abyss, till every sphere
Shall be one living spirit; so shall Greece—

SATAN.

Be as all things beneath the empyrean,
Mine! Art thou eyeless like old Destiny,
Thou mockery-king, crowned with a wreath of thorns—
Whose sceptre is a reed, the broken reed
Which pierces thee, whose throne a chair of scorn?
For seest thou not beneath this crystal floor
The innumerable worlds of golden light
Which are my empire, and the least of them
. . . which thou wouldst redeem from me?
Know'st thou not them my portion?
Or wouldst rekindle the . . strife
Which our great Father then did arbitrate
When he assigned to his competing sons
Each his apportioned realm?
Thou Destiny,
Thou who art mailed in the omnipotence
Of Him who sends thee forth, whate'er thy task,
Speed, spare not to accomplish! and be mine
Thy trophies, whether Greece again become
The fountain in the desert whence the earth
Shall drink of freedom, which shall give it strength
To suffer, or a gulf of hollow death
To swallow all delight, all life, all hope.
Go, thou vicegerent of my will, no less

Than of the Father's. But, lest thou shouldst faint,
The wingèd hounds famine and pestilence
Shall wait on thee; the hundred-forkèd snake
Insatiate superstition still shall . . .
The earth behind thy steps; and war shall hover
Above, and fraud shall gape below, and change
Shall flit before thee on her dragon wings,
Convulsing and consuming. And I add
Three phials of the tears which demons weep
When virtuous spirits through the gate of death
Pass triumphing over the thorns of life,—
Sceptres and crowns, mitres and swords and snares,
Trampling in scorn, like him and Socrates.
The first is anarchy; when power and pleasure,
Glory and science and security,
On freedom hang like fruit on the green tree,
Then pour it forth, and men shall gather ashes.
The second, tyranny—

CHRIST.

Obdurate spirit!
Thou seest but the past in the to-come.
Pride is thy error and thy punishment.
Boast not thine empire, dream not that thy worlds
Are more than furnace-sparks or rainbow-drops
Before the Power that wields and kindles them.
True greatness asks not space; true excellence
Lives in the Spirit of all things that live,
Which lends it to the worlds thou callest thine.

. . . . .

MAHOMET.

. . . . .

Haste thou, and fill the waning crescent
With beams as keen as those which pierced the shadow
Of Christian night rolled back upon the West
When the orient moon of Islam rode in triumph
From Tmolus to the Acroceraunian snow.

. . . . .

Wake, thou word
Of God, and from the throne of Destiny
Even to the utmost limit of thy way
May triumph

. . . . . .

Be thou a curse on them whose creed
Divides and multiplies the most high God!

1821.

LXXIV.

I WOULD not be a king—Enough
Of woe it is to love:
The path to power is steep and rough,
And tempests reign above.

I would not climb the imperial throne;
'Tis built on ice which fortune's sun
Thaws in the height of noon.
Then farewell, king! Yet, were I one,
Care would not come so soon.
Would he and I were far away
Keeping flocks on Himalay!

LXXV.

O THOU immortal deity
Whose throne is in the depth of human thought,
I do adjure thy power and thee
By all that man may be, by all that he is not,
By all that he has been and yet must be!

LXXVI.

HE wanders, like a day-appearing dream,
Through the dim wildernesses of the mind;
Through desert woods and tracts, which seem
Like ocean, homeless, boundless, unconfined.

LXXVII.

ON KEATS,

WHO DESIRED THAT ON HIS TOMB SHOULD BE INSCRIBED—

"HERE lieth One whose name was writ on water."
But, ere the breath that could erase it blew,
Death, in remorse for that fell slaughter,

Death, the immortalizing winter, flew
Athwart the stream,—and time's monthless torrent grew
A scroll of crystal, blazoning the name
Of Adonais.—

1821.

LXXVIII.

THE rude wind is singing
The dirge of the music dead;
The cold worms are clinging
Where kisses were lately fed.

LXXIX.

"What art thou, presumptuous, who profanest
The wreath to mighty poets only due,
Even whilst like a forgotten moon thou wanest?
Touch not those leaves which for the eternal few
Who wander o'er the paradise of fame
In sacred dedication ever grew;—
One of the crowd thou art without a name."
"Ah! friend, 'tis the false laurel that I wear.
Bright though it seem, ...
. . . . it is not the same
As that which bound Milton's immortal hair;
Its dew is poison; and the hopes that quicken
Under its chilling shade, though seeming fair,
Are flowers which die almost before they sicken."

LXXX.

WHEN soft winds and sunny skies
With the green earth harmonize,
And the young and dewy dawn,
Bold as an unhunted fawn,
Up the windless heaven is gone,
Laugh!—for, ambushed in the day,
Clouds and whirlwinds watch their prey.

LXXXI.

THE babe is at peace within the womb,
The corpse is at rest within the tomb,
We begin in what we end.

LXXXII.

GINEVRA.

WILD, pale, and wonder-stricken, even as one
Who staggers forth into the air and sun
From the dark chamber of a mortal fever,—
Bewildered, and incapable, and ever
Fancying strange comments, in her dizzy brain,
Of usual shapes, till the familiar train
Of objects and of persons passed like things
Strange as a dreamer's mad imaginings,—
Ginevra from the nuptial altar went;
The vows to which her lips had sworn assent
Rung in her brain still with a jarring din,
Deafening the lost intelligence within.

And so she moved under the bridal veil,
Which made the paleness of her cheek more pale,
And deepened the faint crimson of her mouth,
And darkened her dark locks, as moonlight doth;
And of the gold and jewels glittering there
She scarce felt conscious, but the weary glare
Lay like a chaos of unwelcome light,
Vexing the sense with gorgeous undelight.
A moonbeam in the shadow of a cloud
Were less heavenly fair. Her face was bowed;
And, as she passed, the diamonds in her hair
Were mirrored in the polished marble stair
Which led from the cathedral to the street;
And ever as she went her light fair feet
Erased these images.

. . . . . .

The bridemaidens who round her thronging came:—
Some with a sense of self-rebuke and shame,
Envying the unenviable; and others
Making the joy which should have been another's
Their own by gentle sympathy; and some
Sighing to think of an unhappy home;
Some few admiring what can ever lure
Maidens to leave the heaven serene and pure
Of parents' smiles for life's great cheat—a thing
Bitter to taste, sweet in imagining.

But they are all dispersed—and lo! she stands
Looking in idle grief on her white hands,
Alone within the garden now her own,
(And through the sunny air, with jangling tone,
The music of the merry marriage-bells,
Killing the azure silence, sinks and swells)—
Absorbed like one within a dream who dreams
That he is dreaming, until slumber seems
A mockery of itself—when suddenly
Antonio stood before her, pale as she.

With agony, with sorrow, and with pride,
He lifted his wan eyes upon the bride,
And said—"Is this thy faith?" And then, as one
Whose sleeping face is stricken by the sun
With light like a harsh voice, which bids him rise
And look upon his day of life with eyes
Which weep in vain that they can dream no more,
Ginevra saw her lover; and forbore
To shriek or faint, and checked the stifling blood
Rushing upon her heart, and unsubdued
Said: "Friend, if earthly violence or ill,
Suspicion, doubt, or the tyrannic will
Of parents, chance or custom, time or change,
Or circumstance or terror or revenge,
Or wildered looks or words, or evil speech,
With all their stings and venom, can impeach
Our love,—we love not. If the grave, which hides
The victim from the tyrant, and divides
The cheek that whitens from the eyes that dart
Imperious inquisition to the heart
That is another's, could dissever ours,
We love not."—"What! do not the silent hours
Beckon thee to Gherardi's bridal bed?
Is not that ring"——a pledge, he would have said,
Of broken vows. But she with patient look
The golden circle from her finger took,
And said: "Accept this token of my faith,
The pledge of vows to be absolved by death.
And I am dead, or shall be soon—my knell
Will mix its music with that merry bell;
Does it not sound as if they sweetly said

'We toll a corpse out of the marriage bed?'
The flowers upon my bridal chamber strewn
Will serve unfaded for my bier—so soon
That even the dying violet will not die
Before Ginevra." The strong fantasy
Had made her accents weaker and more weak,
And quenched the crimson life upon her cheek,
And glazed her eyes, and spread an atmosphere
Round her which chilled the burning noon with fear,
Making her but an image of the thought
Which, like a prophet or a shadow, brought
News of the terrors of the coming time.

Like an accuser branded with the crime
He would have cast on a belovèd friend,
Whose dying eyes reproach not to the end
The pale betrayer—he then with vain repentance
Would share, he cannot now avert, the sentence—
Antonio stood, and would have spoken; when
The compound voice of women and of men
Was heard approaching. He retired; while she
Was led amid the admiring company
Back to the palace,—and her maidens soon
Changed her attire for the afternoon,
And left her at her own request to keep
An hour of quiet and rest. Like one asleep
With open eyes and folded hands she lay,
Pale in the light of the declining day.

Meanwhile the day sinks fast, the sun is set,
And in the lighted hall the guests are met.
The beautiful looked lovelier in the light
Of love and admiration and delight
Reflected from a thousand hearts and eyes,
Kindling a momentary paradise.
This crowd is safer than the silent wood,
Where love's own doubts disturb the solitude.
On frozen hearts the fiery rain of wine
Falls, and the dew of music more divine
Tempers the deep emotions of the time
To spirits cradled in a sunny clime.
How many meet who never yet have met,
To part too soon, but never to forget!

How many saw the beauty, power, and wit,
Of looks and words which ne'er enchanted yet!
But life's familiar veil was now withdrawn.
As the world leaps before an earthquake's dawn,
And, unprophetic of the coming hours,
The matin winds from the expanded flowers
Scatter their hoarded incense, and awaken
The earth, until the dewy sleep is shaken
From every living heart which it possesses,
Through seas and winds, cities and wildernesses,—
As if the future and the past were all
Treasured i' the instant; so Gherardi's hall
Laughed in the mirth of its lord's festival;—
Till some one asked "Where is the Bride?" And then
A bridesmaid went; and ere she came again
A silence fell upon the guests—a pause
Of expectation, as when beauty awes
All hearts with its approach, though unbeheld;
Then wonder; and then fear that wonder quelled:—
For whispers passed from mouth to ear which drew
The colour from the hearer's cheeks, and flew
Louder and swifter round the company.
And then Gherardi entered with an eye
Of ostentatious trouble, and a crowd
Surrounded him, and some were weeping loud.

They found Ginevra dead: if it be death
To lie without motion or pulse or breath,
With waxen cheeks, and limbs cold, stiff, and white,
And open eyes whose fixed and glassy light
Mocked at the speculation they had owned;
If it be death when there is felt around
A smell of clay, a pale and icy glare,
And silence, and a sense that lifts the hair
From the scalp to the ankles, as it were
Corruption from the spirit passing forth,
And giving all it shrouded to the earth,
And leaving, as swift lightning in its flight,
Ashes and smoke and darkness. In our night
Of thought, we know thus much of death,—no more
Than the unborn dream of *our* life, before
Their barks are wrecked on its inhospitable shore.

The marriage-feast and its solemnity
Was turned to funeral pomp. The company,
With heavy hearts and looks, broke up. Nor they
Who loved the dead went weeping on their way,
Alone; but sorrow mixed with sad surprise
Loosened the springs of pity in all eyes,
In which that form whose fate they weep in vain
Will never, thought they, kindle smiles again.
The lamps, which, half extinguished in their haste,
Gleamed few and faint o'er the abandoned feast,
Showed as it were within the vaulted room
A cloud of sorrow hanging, as if gloom
Had passed out of men's minds into the air.
Some few yet stood around Gherardi there,
Friends and relations of the dead;—and he,
A loveless man, accepted torpidly
The consolation that he wanted not;
Awe in the place of grief within him wrought.
Their whispers made the solemn silence seem
More still. Some wept;
Some melted into tears without a sob;
And some, with hearts that might be heard to throb,
Leant on the table, and at intervals
Shuddered to hear through the deserted halls
And corridors the thrilling shrieks which came
Upon the breeze of night, that shook the flame
Of every torch and taper as it swept
From out the chamber where the women kept.
Their tears fell on the dear companion cold
Of pleasures now departed. Then was knolled
The bell of death; and soon the priests arrived,—
And, finding Death their penitent had shrived,
Returned, like ravens from a corse whereon
A vulture has just feasted to the bone.
And then the mourning women came.

* * * * *

THE DIRGE.

OLD Winter was gone
In his weakness back to the mountains hoar;
And the Spring came down
From the planet that hovers upon the shore

Where the sea of sunlight encroaches
On the limits of wintry night.
If the land and the air and the sea
Rejoice not when Spring approaches,
We did not rejoice in thee,
Ginevra!

She is still, she is cold,
On the bridal couch!
One step to the white death-bed,
And one to the bier,
And one to the charnel, and one—oh where?
The dark arrow fled
In the noon.
Ere the sun through heaven once more has rolled,
The rats in her heart
Will have made their nest,
And the worms be alive in her golden hair.
While the Spirit that guides the sun
Sits throned in his flaming chair,
She shall sleep.

. . . . .

1821.

LXXXIII.

EVENING.

PONTE AL MARE, PISA.

I.

THE sun is set; the swallows are asleep;
The bats are flitting fast in the grey air;
The slow soft toads out of damp corners creep;
And evening's breath, wandering here and there
Over the quivering surface of the stream,
Wakes not one ripple from its summer dream.

II.

There is no dew on the dry grass to-night,
Nor damp within the shadow of the trees;
The wind is intermitting, dry, and light;
And in the inconstant motion of the breeze
The dust and straws are driven up and down,
And whirled about the pavement of the town.

III.

Within the surface of the fleeting river
The wrinkled image of the city lay,
Immovably unquiet, and for ever
It trembles, but it never fades away.
Go to the . . . .
You, being changed, will find it then as now.

IV.

The chasm in which the sun has sunk is shut
By darkest barriers of enormous cloud,
Like mountain over mountain huddled, but
Growing and moving upwards in a crowd;
And over it a space of watery blue,
Which the keen evening star is shining through.

1821.

LXXXIV.

THE BOAT ON THE SERCHIO.

OUR boat is asleep on Serchio's stream,
Its sails are folded like thoughts in a dream;
The helm sways idly, hither and thither.
Dominic the boatman has brought the mast
And the oars and the sails; but 'tis sleeping fast,
Like a beast unconscious of its tether.

The stars burnt out in the pale blue air,
And the thin white moon lay withering there;
To tower and cavern and rift and tree
The owl and the bat fled drowsily.
Day had kindled the dewy woods,
And the rocks above and the stream below,
And the vapours in their multitudes,
And the Apennines' shroud of summer snow,
And clothed with light of aery gold
The mists in their eastern caves uprolled.
Day had awakened all things that be;—
The lark and the thrush and the swallow free,
And the milkmaid's song, and the mower's scythe,
And the matin-bell, and the mountain bee.
Fireflies were quenched on the dewy corn;
Glow-worms went out on the river's brim,
Like lamps which a student forgets to trim;

The beetle forgot to wind his horn;
The crickets were still in the meadow and hill.
Like a flock of rooks at a farmer's gun,
Night's dreams and terrors, every one,
Fled from the brains which are their prey
From the lamp's death to the morning ray.

All rose to do the task He set to each
Who shaped us to his ends and not our own.
The million rose to learn, and one to teach
What none yet ever knew, nor can be known;
. . . and many rose
Whose woe was such that fear became desire.
Melchior and Lionel were not among those;
They from the throng of men had stepped aside,
And made their home under the green hill side.
It was that hill whose intervening brow
Screens Lucca from the Pisan's envious eye;
Which the circumfluous plain waving below,
Like a wide lake of green fertility,
With streams and fields and marshes bare,
Divides from the far Apennines, which lie
Islanded in the immeasurable air.

"What think you, as she lies in her green cove,
Our little sleeping boat is dreaming of?"
"If morning dreams are true, why I should guess
That she was dreaming of our idleness,
And of the miles of watery way
We should have led her by this time of day."

"Never mind!" said Lionel.
"Give care to the winds; they can bear it well
About yon poplar tops. And see!
The white clouds are driving merrily,
And the stars we miss this morn will light
More willingly our return to-night.
How it whistles, Dominic's long black hair!
List my dear fellow; the breeze blows fair:
Hear how it sings into the air."

"Of us and of our lazy motions,"
Impatiently said Melchior,
"If I can guess a boat's emotions;

And how we ought, two hours before,
To have been the devil knows where."
And then, in such transalpine Tuscan
As would have killed a Della-Cruscan,

. . . . . .

So, Lionel according to his art
Weaving his idle words, Melchior said:
"She dreams that we are not yet out of bed;
We'll put a soul into her, and a heart
Which like a dove chased by a dove shall beat."

. . . . . .

"Ay, heave the ballast overboard,
And stow the eatables in the aft locker."
"Would not this keg be best a little lowered?"
"No, now all's right." "Those bottles of warm tea—
(Give me some straw)—must be stowed tenderly;
Such as we used, in summer after six,
To cram in great-coat pockets, and to mix
Hard eggs and radishes and rolls at Eton,
And, couched on stolen hay in those green harbours
Farmers called gaps, and we schoolboys called arbours,
Would feast till eight."

. . . . . .

With a bottle in one hand,
As if his very soul were at a stand,
Lionel stood—when Melchior brought him steady:—
"Sit at the helm—fasten this sheet—all ready!"

The chain is loosed, the sails are spread,
The living breath is fresh behind,
As, with dews and sunrise fed,
Comes the laughing morning wind.
The sails are full, the boat makes head
Against the Serchio's torrent fierce;
Then flags with intermitting course,
And hangs upon the wave, and stems
The tempest of the . . . .
Which fervid from its mountain source
Shallow, smooth, and strong, doth come.
Swift as fire, tempestuously
It sweeps into the affrighted sea.
In morning's smile its eddies coil;
Its billows sparkle, toss, and boil;

Torturing all its quiet light
Into columns fierce and bright.

The Serchio, twisting forth
Between the marble barriers which it clove
At Ripafratta, leads through the dread chasm
The wave that died the death which lovers love,
Living in what it sought. As if this spasm
Had not yet passed, the toppling mountains cling.
But the clear stream in full enthusiasm
Pours itself on the plain; then, wandering
Down one clear path of effluence crystalline,
Sends its superfluous waves that they may fling
At Arno's feet tribute of corn and wine.
Then, through the pestilential deserts wild
Of tangled marsh and woods of stunted pine,
It rushes to the ocean.

July 1821.

LXXXV.

MUSIC.

I.

I PANT for the music which is divine;
My heart in its thirst is a dying flower.
Pour forth the sound like enchanted wine;
Loosen the notes in a silver shower.
Like a herbless plain for the gentle rain,
I gasp, I faint, till they wake again.

II.

Let me drink of the spirit of that sweet sound
More, oh more!—I am thirsting yet!
It loosens the serpent which care has bound
Upon my heart, to stifle it;
The dissolving strain, through every vein,
Passes into my heart and brain.

III.

As the scent of a violet withered up,
Which grew by the brink of a silver lake,
When the hot noon has drained its dewy cup,
And mist there was none its thirst to slake—

And the violet lay dead while the odour flew
On the wings of the wind o'er the waters blue:

IV.

As one who drinks from a charmèd cup
Of foaming and sparkling and murmuring wine,
Whom a mighty enchantress, filling up,
Invites to love with her kiss divine.

. . . . . .

1821.

LXXXVI.

SONNET TO BYRON.

[I AM afraid these verses will not please you, but]
If I esteemed you less, Envy would kill
Pleasure, and leave to Wonder and Despair
The ministration of the thoughts that fill
The mind which, like a worm whose life may share
A portion of the unapproachable,
Marks your creations rise as fast and fair
As perfect worlds at the Creator's will.
But such is my regard that nor your power
To soar above the heights where others [climb],
Nor fame, that shadow of the unborn hour
Cast from the envious future on the time,
Move one regret for his unhonoured name
Who dares these words:—the worm beneath the sod
May lift itself in homage of the God.

1821.

LXXXVII.

I FAINT, I perish with my love! I grow
Frail as a cloud whose [splendours] pale
Under the evening's ever-changing glow:
I die like mist upon the gale,
And like a wave under the calm I fail.

LXXXVIII.

GREAT Spirit whom the sea of boundless thought
Nurtures within its unimagined caves,
In which thou sittest sole, as in my mind,
Giving a voice to its mysterious waves.

LXXXIX.

FAINT with love, the Lady of the South
Lay in the paradise of Lebanon
Under a heaven of cedar boughs; the drought
Of love was on her lips; the light was gone
Out of her eyes.

XC.

COME, thou awakener of the spirit's ocean,
Zephyr, whom to thy cloud or cave
No thought can trace! speed with thy gentle motion!

XCI.

THE ZUCCA.

I.

SUMMER was dead, and Autumn was expiring,
And infant Winter laughed upon the land
All cloudlessly and cold;—when I, desiring
More in this world than any understand,
Wept o'er the beauty which, like sea retiring,
Had left the earth bare as the wave-worn sand
Of my lorn heart,—and o'er the grass and flowers
Pale for the falsehood of the flattering Hours.

II.

Summer was dead, but I yet lived to weep
The instability of all but weeping;
And on the Earth lulled in her winter sleep
I woke, and envied her as she was sleeping.
Too happy Earth! over thy face shall creep
The wakening vernal airs, until thou, leaping
From unremembered dreams, shalt . . . . see
No death divide thy immortality.

III.

I loved—oh no! I mean not one of ye,
Or any earthly one, though ye are dear
As human heart to human heart may be;
I loved I know not what. But this low sphere,

And all that it contains, contains not thee,—
Thou whom, seen nowhere, I feel everywhere.
From heaven and earth, and all that in them are,
Veiled art thou, like a [storm-benighted ?] star.

IV.

By heaven and earth, from all whose shapes thou flowest,
Neither to be contained, delayed, nor hidden;
Making divine the loftiest and the lowest,
When for a moment thou art not forbidden
To live within the life which thou bestowest;
And leaving noblest things vacant and chidden,
Cold as a corpse after the spirit's flight,
Blank as the sun after the birth of night.

V.

In winds and trees and streams, and all things common;
In music, and the sweet unconscious tone
Of animals, and voices which are human,
Meant to express some feelings of their own;
In the soft motions and rare smile of woman;
In flowers and leaves; and in the grass fresh-shown,
Or dying in the autumn; I the most
Adore thee present, or lament thee lost.

VI.

And thus I went lamenting, when I saw
A plant upon the river's margin lie,
Like one who loved beyond his nature's law,
And in despair had cast him down to die.
Its leaves, which had outlived the frost, the thaw
Had blighted; like a heart which hatred's eye
Can blast not, but which pity kills. The dew
Lay on its spotted leaves like tears too true.

VII.

The Heavens had wept upon it, but the Earth
Had crushed it on her unmaternal breast.

. . . . . .

VIII.

I bore it to my chamber, and I planted
It in a vase full of the lightest mould.
The winter beams which out of heaven slanted
Fell through the window panes, disrobed of cold,

Upon its leaves and flowers; the star which panted
In evening for the day, whose car has rolled
Over the horizon's wave, with looks of light
Smiled on it from the threshold of the night.

IX.

The mitigated influences of air
And light revived the plant; and from it grew
Strong leaves and tendrils; and its flowers fair,
Full as a cup with the vine's burning dew,
O'erflowed with golden colours. An atmosphere
Of vital warmth enfolded it anew;
And every impulse sent to every part
The unbeheld pulsations of its heart.

X.

Well might the plant grow beautiful and strong,
Even if the air and sun had smiled not on it;
For one wept o'er it all the winter long
Tears pure as heaven's rain, which fell upon it
Hour after hour; for sounds of softest song,
Mixed with the stringèd melodies that won it
To leave the gentle lips on which it slept,
Had loosed the heart of him who sat and wept;

XI.

Had loosed his heart, and shook the leaves and flowers
On which he wept, the while the savage storm,
Waked by the darkest of December's hours,
Was raving round the chamber hushed and warm.
The birds were shivering in their leafless bowers,
The fish were frozen in the pools, the form
Of every summer plant was dead;
Whilst this . . .

January 1822.

XCII.

THE ISLE.

THERE was a little lawny islet,
By anemone and violet,
Like mosaic, paven:
And its roof was flowers and leaves
Which the summer's breath enweaves,

Where nor sun nor showers nor breeze
Pierce the pines and tallest trees,—
Each a gem engraven:
Girt by many an azure wave
With which the clouds and mountains pave
A lake's blue chasm.

XCIII.

FRAGMENTS OF AN UNFINISHED DRAMA.

The following fragments are part of a Drama undertaken for the amusement of the individuals who composed our intimate society, but left unfinished. I have preserved a sketch of the story as far as it had been shadowed in the poet's mind.

An Enchantress, living in one of the islands of the Indian Archipelago, saves the life of a Pirate, a man of savage but noble nature. She becomes enamoured of him; and he, inconstant to his mortal love, for a while returns her passion: but at length, recalling the memory of her whom he left, and who laments his loss, he escapes from the Enchanted Island, and returns to his lady. His mode of life makes him again go to sea, and the Enchantress seizes the opportunity to bring him, by a spirit-brewed tempest, back to her Island.

M. W. S.

Scene, before the Cavern of the Indian Enchantress. The Enchantress comes forth.

ENCHANTRESS.

HE came like a dream, in the dawn of life;
He fled like a shadow, before its noon.
He is gone, and my peace is turned to strife,
And I wander and wane like the weary moon.
O sweet Echo, wake,
And for my sake
Make answer the while my heart shall break!

But my heart has a music which Echo's lips,
Though tender and true, yet can answer not,
And the shadow that moves in the soul's eclipse
Can return not the kiss by his now forgot;
Sweet lips! he who hath
On my desolate path
Cast the darkness of absence, worse than death!

The Enchantress makes her spell: she is answered by a Spirit.

Spirit. Within the silent centre of the earth
My mansion is: where I have lived insphered
From the beginning, and around my sleep
Have woven all the wondrous imagery
Of this dim spot which mortals call the world,—
Infinite depths of unknown elements
Massed into one impenetrable mask,
Sheets of immeasurable fire, and veins
Of gold and stones and adamantine iron.
And as a veil in which I walk through heaven
I have wrought mountains, seas, and waves, and clouds,
And lastly light, whose interfusion dawns
In the dark space of interstellar air.

A good Spirit, who watches over the Pirate's fate, leads, in a mysterious manner, the lady of his love to the Enchanted Isle; and has also led thither a Youth, who loves the lady, but whose passion she returns only with a sisterly affection. The ensuing scene takes place between them on their arrival at the Isle, where they meet, but without distinct mutual recognition.

INDIAN YOUTH AND LADY.

Indian. And, if my grief should still be dearer to me
Than all the pleasures in the world beside,
Why would you lighten it?
Lady. I offer only
That which I seek, some human sympathy,
In this mysterious island.
Indian. Oh! my friend,
My sister, my beloved! . . . What do I say!
My brain is dizzy, and I scarce know whether
I speak to thee or her.
Lady. Peace, perturbed heart!
I am to thee only as thou to mine,—
The passing wind which heals the brow at noon,
And may strike cold into the breast at night,
Yet cannot linger where it soothes the most,
Or long soothe could it linger.
Indian. But you said
You also loved?
Lady. Loved! Oh! I love!—Methinks
This word of "love" is fit for all the world;
And that for gentle hearts another name
Would speak of gentler thoughts than the world owns.

I have loved.

Indian. And thou lovest not? If so,
Young as thou art, thou canst afford to weep.

Lady. Oh! would that I could claim exemption
From all the bitterness of that sweet name!
I loved, I love; and, when I love no more,
Let joys and grief perish, and leave despair
To ring the knell of youth. He stood beside me,
The embodied vision of the brightest dream
Which like a dawn heralds the day of life;
The shadow of his presence made my world
A paradise. All familiar things he touched,
All common words he spoke, became to me
Like forms and sounds of a diviner world.
He was as is the sun in his fierce youth,
As terrible and lovely as a tempest;
He came, and went, and left me what I am.
Alas! Why must I think how oft we two
Have sat together near the river springs,
Under the green pavilion which the willow
Spreads on the floor of the unbroken fountain,
Strewn, by the nurslings that linger there,
Over that islet paved with flowers and moss,—
While the musk-rose leaves, like flakes of crimson snow,
Showered on us, and the dove mourned in the pine,
Sad prophetess of sorrows not her own?
The crane returned to her unfrozen haunt,
And the false cuckoo bade the Spring good morn;
And on a wintry bough the widowed bird,
Hid in the deepest night of ivy-leaves,
Renewed the vigils of a sleepless sorrow.
I, left like her, and leaving one like her,
Alike abandoned and abandoning
(Oh! unlike her in this!) the gentlest youth,
Whose love had made my sorrows dear to him,
Even as my sorrow made his love to me!

Indian. One curse of Nature stamps in the same mould
The features of the wretched; and they are
As like as violet to violet,
When memory, the ghost, their colours keeps
'Mid the cold relics of abandoned joy.—

Proceed

Lady. He was a simple innocent boy.
I loved him well, but not as he desired;
Yet even thus he was content to be:—
A short content, for I was . . .
Indian. [*Aside*] God of heaven!
From such an islet, such a river-spring . . . !
I dare not ask her if there stood upon it
A pleasure-dome surmounted by a crescent,
With steps to the blue water.—[*Aloud*] It may be
That Nature masks in life several copies
Of the same lot, so that the sufferers
May feel another's sorrow as their own,
And find in friendship what they lost in love.
That cannot be: yet it is strange that we,
From the same scene, by the same path to this
Realm of abandonment . . . But speak! your breath—
Your breath is like soft music, your words are
The echoes of a voice which on my heart
Sleeps like a melody of early days.
But, as you said—
Lady. He was so awful, yet
So beautiful in mystery and terror,
Calming me, as the loveliness of heaven
Soothes the unquiet sea. And yet not so,
For he seemed stormy, and would often seem
A quenchless sun masked in portentous clouds;
For such his thoughts and even his actions were;—
But he was not of them, nor they of him,
But as they hid his splendour from the earth.
Some said he was a man of blood and peril,
And steeped in bitter infamy to the lips.
More need was there I should be innocent;
More need that I should be most true and kind;
And much more need that there should be found one
To share remorse and scorn and solitude,
And all the ills that wait on those who do
The tasks of ruin in the world of life.
He fled, and I have followed him.
Indian. Such a one
Is he who was the winter of *my* peace.—
But, fairest stranger, when didst thou depart
From the far hills where rise the springs of India?

How didst thou pass the intervening sea?

Lady. If I be sure I am not dreaming now,
I should not doubt to say it was a dream.
Methought a star came down from heaven,
And rested 'mid the plants of India
Which I had given a shelter from the frost
Within my chamber. There the meteor lay,
Panting forth light among the leaves and flowers,
As if it lived, and was outworn with speed;
Or that it loved, and passion made the pulse
Of its bright life throb like an anxious heart:—
Till it diffused itself, and all the chamber
And walls seemed melted into emerald fire
That burned not. In the midst of which appeared
A spirit like a child, and laughed aloud
A thrilling peal of such sweet merriment
As made the blood tingle in my warm feet:
Then bent over a vase, and, murmuring
Low unintelligible melodies,
Placed something in the mould like melon-seeds,
And slowly faded. And in place of it
A soft hand issued from the veil of fire,
Holding a cup like a magnolia flower;
And poured upon the earth within the vase
The element with which it overflowed,
Brighter than morning light, and purer than
The water of the springs of Himalay.

Indian. You waked not?

Lady. Not until my dream became
Like a child's legend on the tideless sand,
Which the first foam erases half, and half
Leaves legible. At length I rose, and went
Visiting my flowers from pot to pot, and thought
To set new cuttings in the empty urns;
And, when I came to that beside the lattice,
I saw two little dark-green leaves
Lifting the light mould at their birth, and then
I half-remembered my forgotten dream.
And day by day, green as a gourd in June,
The plant grew fresh and thick, yet no one knew
What plant it was. Its stem and tendrils seemed
Like emerald snakes, mottled and diamonded

With azure mail and streaks of woven silver;
And all the sheaths that folded the dark buds
Rose like the crest of cobra-di-capel,
Until the golden eye of the bright flower
Through the dark lashes of those veinèd lids,
. . disencumbered of their silent sleep,
Gazed like a star into the morning light.
Its leaves were delicate; you almost saw
The pulses
With which the purple velvet flower was fed
To overflow, and, like a poet's heart
Changing bright fancy to sweet sentiment,
Changed half the light to fragrance. It soon fell,
And to a green and dewy embryo-fruit
Left all its treasured beauty. Day by day
I nursed the plant, and on the double flute
Played to it on the sunny winter days
Soft melodies, as sweet as April rain
On silent leaves, and sang those words in which
Passion makes Echo taunt the sleeping strings.
And I would send tales of forgotten love
Late into the lone night; and sing wild songs
Of maids deserted in the olden time;
And weep like a soft cloud in April's bosom
Upon the sleeping eyelids of the plant,—
So that perhaps it dreamed that Spring was come,
And crept abroad into the moonlight air,
And loosened all its limbs, as, noon by noon,
The sun averted less his oblique beam.

Indian. And the plant died not in the frost?

Lady. It grew;
And went out of the lattice which I left
Half open for it,—trailing its quaint spires
Along the garden, and across the lawn,
And down the slope of moss, and through the tufts
Of wild-flower roots, and stumps of trees o'ergrown
With simple lichens, and old hoary stones,
On to the margin of the glassy pool,
Even to a nook of unblown violets
And lilies-of-the-valley yet unborn,
Under a pine, with ivy overgrown.
And there its fruit lay like a sleeping lizard

Under the shadows. But, when Spring indeed
Came to unswathe her infants, and the lilies
Peeped from their bright-green masks to wonder at
This shape of autumn couched in their recess,
Then it dilated; and it grew until
One half lay floating on the fountain wave,
Whose pulse, elapsed in unlike sympathies,
Kept time
Among the snowy water-lily buds.
Its shape was such as summer melody
Of the south wind in spicy vales might give
To some light cloud bound from the golden dawn
To fairy isles of evening; and it seemed
In hue and form that it had been a mirror
Of all the hues and forms around it and
Upon it pictured by the sunny beams
Which, from the bright vibrations of the pool,
Were thrown upon the rafters and the roof
Of boughs and leaves, and on the pillared stems
Of the dark sylvan temple, and reflections
Of every infant flower and star of moss
And veined leaf in the azure odorous air.
And thus it lay in the elysian calm
Of its own beauty, floating on the line
Which, like a film in purest space, divided
The heaven beneath the water from the heaven
Above the clouds. And every day I went
Watching its growth, and wondering:
And, as the day grew hot, methought I saw
A glassy vapour dancing on the pool,—
And on it little quaint and filmy shapes
With dizzy motion wheel and rise and fall,
Like clouds of gnats with perfect lineaments.

. . . . .

O friend, sleep was a vale uplift from heaven—
As if heaven dawned upon the world of dream—
When darkness rose on the extinguished day
Out of the eastern wilderness.

Indian. I too
Have found a moment's paradise in sleep
Half compensate a hell of waking sorrow.

1822.

XCIV.

CHARLES THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—*The Masque of the Inns of Court.*

A Pursuivant. PLACE for the Marshal of the Masque!

First Citizen. What thinkest thou of this quaint masque, which turns,
Like morning from the shadow of the night,
The night to day, and London to a place
Of peace and joy?

Second Citizen. And hell to heaven!
Eight years are gone,
And they seem hours, since in this populous street
I trod on grass made green by summer's rain;
For the red plague kept state within that palace
Where now that vanity reigns. In nine years more
The roots will be refreshed with civil blood;
And thank the mercy of insulted Heaven
That sin and wrongs wound, as an orphan's cry,
The patience of the great Avenger's ear.

A Youth. Yet, father, 'tis a happy sight to see,—
Beautiful, innocent, and unforbidden
By God or man. 'Tis like the bright procession
Of skiey visions in a solemn dream
From which men wake as from a paradise,
And draw new strength to tread the thorns of life.
If God be good, wherefore should this be evil?
And, if this be not evil, dost thou not draw
Unseasonable poison from the flowers
Which bloom so rarely in this barren world?
Oh! kill these bitter thoughts which make the present
Dark as the future!—

. . . . . .

When Avarice and Tyranny, vigilant Fear
And open-eyed Conspiracy, lie sleeping
As on hell's threshold; and all gentle thoughts
Waken to worship Him who giveth joys,
With his own gift.

Second Citizen. How young art thou in this old age of time!

How green in this grey world! Canst thou discern
The signs of seasons, yet perceive no hint
Of change in that stage-scene in which thou art
Not a spectator but an actor? or
Art thou a puppet moved by [enginery]?
The day that dawns in fire will die in storms,
Even though the noon be calm. *My* travel's done,—
Before the whirlwind wakes I shall have found
My inn of lasting rest; but thou must still
Be journeying on in this inclement air.
Wrap thy old cloak about thy back;
Nor leave the broad and plain and beaten road,
Although no flowers smile on the trodden dust,
For the violet paths of pleasure. This Charles the First
Rose like the equinoctial sun, ...
By vapours, through whose threatening ominous veil
Darting his altered influence he has gained
This height of noon—from which he must decline,
Amid the darkness of conflicting storms,
To dank extinction and to latest night.
. . . There goes
The apostate Strafford; he whose titles . . . .
. . . whispered aphorisms
From Machiavel and Bacon: and, if Judas
Had been as brazen and as bold as he. . . . .
First Citizen. That
Is the Archbishop.
Second Citizen. Rather say the Pope:
London will be soon his Rome. He walks
As if he trod upon the heads of men:
He looks elate, drunken with blood and gold.
Beside him moves the Babylonian woman
Invisibly, and with her as with his shadow,
Mitred adulterer! he is joined in sin,
Which turns Heaven's milk of mercy to revenge.
Third Citizen (*lifting up his eyes*). Good Lord! rain it down upon him!
Amid her ladies walks the papist queen
As if her nice feet scorned our English earth.
The Canaanitish Jezebel! I would be
A dog if I might tear her with my teeth!

There's old Sir Henry Vane, the Earl of Pembroke,
Lord Essex, and Lord Keeper Coventry,
And others who made base their English breed
By vile participation of their honours
With papists, atheists, tyrants, and apostates.
When lawyers masque, 'tis time for honest men
To strip the vizor from their purposes.
A seasonable time for masquers this!
When Englishmen and Protestants should sit
. . . dust on their dishonoured heads,
To avert the wrath of Him whose scourge is felt
For the great sins which have drawn down from heaven
. . . and foreign overthrow.
The remnant of the martyred saints in Rochefort
Have been abandoned by their faithless allies
To that idolatrous and adulterous torturer
Lewis of France,—the Palatinate is lost. . . . .

Enter LEIGHTON (*who has been branded in the face*) *and* BASTWICK.

Canst thou be—art thou . . . . ?

Leighton. I *was* Leighton: what
I *am* thou seest. And yet turn thine eyes,
And with thy memory look on thy friend's mind,
Which is unchanged, and where is written deep
The sentence of my judge.

Third Citizen. Are these the marks with which
Laud thinks to improve the image of his Maker
Stamped on the face of man? Curses upon him,
The impious tyrant!

Second Citizen. It is said besides
That lewd and papist drunkards may profane
The Sabbath with their . . .
And has permitted that most heathenish custom
Of dancing round a pole dressed up with wreaths
On May-day.
A man who thus twice crucifies his God
May well . . . his brother.—In my mind, friend,
The root of all this ill is prelacy.
I would cut up the root.

Third Citizen. And by what means?

Second Citizen. Smiting each Bishop under the fifth rib.

Third Citizen. You seem to know the vulnerable place
Of these same crocodiles.
Second Citizen. I learnt it in
Egyptian bondages, sir. Your worm of Nile
Betrays not with its flattering tears like they;
For, when they cannot kill, they whine and weep.
Nor is it half so greedy of men's bodies
As they of soul and all; nor does it wallow
In slime as they in simony and lies
And close lusts of the flesh.
A Marshalsman. Give place, give place!
You torchbearers, advance to the great gate,
And then attend the Marshal of the Masque
Into the royal presence.
A Law Student. What thinkest thou
Of this quaint show of ours, my aged friend?
Even now we see the redness of the torches
Inflame the night to the eastward, and the clarions
Gasp (?) to us on the wind's wave. It comes!
And their sounds, floating hither round the pageant,
Rouse up the astonished air.
First Citizen. I will not think but that our country's wounds
May yet be healed. The king is just and gracious,
Though wicked counsels now pervert his will:
These once cast off—
Second Citizen. As adders cast their skins
And keep their venom, so kings often change;
Counsels and counsellors hang on one another,
Hiding the loathsome . . . ,
Like the base patchwork of a leper's rags.
The Youth. Oh! still those dissonant thoughts!—List how the music
Grows on the enchanted air! And see, the torches
Restlessly flashing, and the crowd divided
Like waves before an admiral's prow!
. . . . . .
A Marshalsman. Give place
To the Marshal of the Masque!
A Pursuivant. Room for the King!
The Youth. How glorious! See those thronging chariots

Rolling, like painted clouds before the wind,
Behind their solemn steeds : how some are shaped
Like curved sea-shells dyed by the azure depths
Of Indian seas ; some like the new-born moon ;
And some like cars in which the Romans climbed
(Canopied by Victory's eagle-wings outspread)
The Capitolian ! See how gloriously
The mettled horses in the torchlight stir
Their gallant riders, while *they* check their pride,
Like shapes of some diviner element
Than English air, and beings nobler than
The envious and admiring multitude.

Second Citizen. Ay, there they are—
Nobles, and sons of nobles, patentees,
Monopolists, and stewards of this poor farm
On whose lean sheep sit the prophetic crows.
Here is the pomp that strips the houseless orphan,
Here is the pride that breaks the desolate heart.
These are the lilies glorious as Solomon,
Who toil not neither do they spin—unless
It be the webs they catch poor rogues withal.
Here is the surfeit which to them who earn
The niggard wages of the earth scarce leaves
The tithe that will support them till they crawl
Back to her cold hard bosom. Here is health
Followed by grim disease, glory by shame,
Waste by lame famine, wealth by squalid want,
And England's sin by England's punishment.
And, as the effect pursues the cause foregone,
Lo, giving substance to my words, behold
At once the sign and the thing signified—
A troop of cripples, beggars, and lean outcasts,
Horsed upon stumbling jades, carted with dung,
Dragged for a day from cellars and low cabins
And rotten hiding-holes, to point the moral
Of this presentment, and bring up the rear !

The Youth. 'Tis but
The anti-masque, and serves as discords do
In sweetest music. Who would love May flowers
If they succeeded not to winter's flaw ?
Or day unchanged by night, or joy itself

Without the touch of sorrow?
Second Citizen. I and thou . . .
A Marshalsman. Place, give place!

SCENE II.—*A Chamber in Whitehall.*

Enter the KING, QUEEN, LAUD, LORD STRAFFORD, LORD COTTINGTON, *and other Lords;* ARCHY; *also* ST JOHN, *with some Gentlemen of the Inns of Court.*

King. Thanks, gentlemen. I heartily accept
This token of your service: your gay masque
Was performed gallantly. And it shows well
When subjects twine such flowers of observance (?)
With the sharp thorns that deck the English crown.
A gentle heart enjoys what it confers,
Even as it suffers that which it inflicts,
Though Justice guides the stroke.
Accept my hearty thanks.
Queen. And, gentlemen,
Call your poor Queen your debtor. Your quaint pageant
Rose on me like the figures of past years,
Treading their still path back to infancy,
More beautiful and mild as they draw nearer
The quiet cradle. I could have almost wept
To think I was in Paris, where these shows
Are well devised—such as I was ere yet
My young heart shared a portion of the burthen,
The careful weight, of this great monarchy.
There, gentlemen, between the sovereign's pleasure
And that which it regards, no clamour lifts
Its proud interposition.
In Paris ribald censurers dare not move
Their poisonous tongues against these sinless sports;
And *his* smile
Warms those who bask in it, as ours would do
If . . . Take my heart's thanks: add them, gentlemen,
To those good words which, were he King of France,
My royal lord would turn to golden deeds.
St John. Madam, the love of Englishmen can make
The lightest favour of their lawful king
Outweigh a despot's.—We humbly take our leaves,

Enriched by smiles which France can never buy.

[*Exeunt* ST JOHN *and the Gentlemen of the Inns of Court.*

King. My Lord Archbishop,
Mark you what spirit sits in St John's eyes?
Methinks it is too saucy for this presence.

Archy. Yes, pray your Grace look: for, like an unsophisticated . . . sees everything upside down, you who are wise will discern the shadow of an idiot in lawn sleeves and a rochet setting springes to catch woodcocks in haymaking time. Poor Archy, whose owl-eyes are tempered to the error of his age, and because he is a fool, and by special ordinance of God forbidden ever to see himself as he is, sees now in that deep eye a blindfold devil sitting on the ball, and weighing words out between king and subjects. One scale is full of promises, and the other full of protestations: and then another devil creeps behind the first out of the dark windings [of a] pregnant lawyer's brain, and takes the bandage from the other's eyes, and throws a sword into the left-hand scale, for all the world like my Lord Essex's there.

Strafford. A rod in pickle for the Fool's back!

Archy. Ay, and some are now smiling whose tears will make the brine; for the Fool sees . .

Strafford. Insolent! You shall have your coat turned and be whipped out of the palace for this.

Archy. When all the fools are whipped, and all the protestant writers, while the knaves are whipping the fools ever since a thief was set to catch a thief. If all turncoats were whipped out of palaces, poor Archy would be disgraced in good company. Let the knaves whip the fools, and all the fools laugh at it. [Let the] wise and godly slit each each other's noses and ears (having no need of any sense of discernment in their craft); and the knaves, to marshal them, join in a procession to Bedlam, to entreat the madmen to omit their sublime Platonic contemplations, and manage the state of England. Let all the honest men who lie pinched (?) up at the prisons or the pillories, in custody of the pursuivants of the High-Commission Court, marshal them.

Enter Secretary LYTTELTON, *with papers.*

King (*looking over the papers*). These stiff Scots
His Grace of Canterbury must take order
To force under the Church's yoke.—You, Wentworth,
Shall be myself in Ireland, and shall add
Your wisdom, gentleness, and energy,
To what in me were wanting.—My Lord Weston,

Look that those merchants draw not without loss
Their bullion from the Tower; and, on the payment
Of shipmoney, take fullest compensation
For violation of our royal forests,
Whose limits, from neglect, have been o'ergrown
With cottages and cornfields. The uttermost
Farthing exact from those who claim exemption
From knighthood: that which once was a reward
Shall thus be made a punishment, that subjects
May know how majesty can wear at will
The rugged mood.—My Lord of Coventry
Lay my command upon the Courts below
That bail be not accepted for the prisoners
Under the warrant of the Star Chamber.
The people shall not find the stubbornness
Of Parliament a cheap or easy method
Of dealing with their rightful sovereign:
And doubt not this, my Lord of Coventry,
We will find time and place for fit rebuke.—
My Lord of Canterbury.

Archy. The fool is here.

Laud. I crave permission of your Majesty
To order that this insolent fellow be
Chastised: he mocks the sacred character,
Scoffs at the state, and—

King. What, my Archy?
He mocks and mimics all he sees and hears,
Yet with a quaint and graceful license. Prithee
For this once do not as Prynne would, were he
Primate of England. With your Grace's leave,
He lives in his own world; and, like a parrot
Hung in his gilded prison from the window
Of a queen's bower over the public way,
Blasphemes with a bird's mind:—his words, like arrows
Which know no aim beyond the archer's wit,
Strike sometimes what eludes philosophy.—
[*To Archy.*] Go, sirrah, and repent of your offence
Ten minutes in the rain: be it your penance
To bring news how the world goes there.—Poor Archy!
[*Exit Archy.*
He weaves about himself a world of mirth

Out of the wreck of ours.

Laud. I take with patience, as my Master did,
All scoffs permitted from above.

King. My lord,
Pray overlook these papers. Archy's words
Had wings, but these have talons.

Queen. And the lion
That wears them must be tamed. My dearest lord,
I see the new-born courage in thine eye
Armed to strike dead the Spirit of the Time,
Which spurs to rage the many-headed beast.
Do thou persist: for faint but in resolve,
And it were better thou hadst still remained
The slave of thine own slaves, who tear like curs
The fugitive, and flee from the pursuer,
And opportunity, that empty wolf,
Flies at his throat who falls. Subdue thy actions
Even to the disposition of thy purpose,
And be that tempered as the Ebro's steel;
And banish weak-eyed Mercy to the weak,
Whence she will greet thee with a gift of peace,—
And not betray thee with a traitor's kiss,
As when she keeps the company of rebels,
Who think that she is Fear. This do, lest we
Should fall as from a glorious pinnacle
In a bright dream, and wake, as from a dream,
Out of our worshiped state.

King. Beloved friend,
God is my witness that this weight of power,
Which He sets me my earthly task to wield
Under His law, is my delight and pride
Only because thou lovest that and me.
For a king bears the office of a God
To all the under world; and to his God
Alone he must deliver up his trust,
Unshorn of its permitted attributes.
[It seems] now as the baser elements
Had mutinied against the golden sun
That kindles them to harmony, and quells
Their self-destroying rapine. The wild million
Strike at the eye that guides them; like as humours

Of the distempered body that conspire
Against the spirit of life throned in the heart,—
And thus become the prey of one another,
And last of death. . . .

Strafford. That which would be ambition in a subject
Is duty in a sovereign; for on him,
As on a keystone, hangs the arch of life,
Whose safety is its strength. Degree and form,
And all that makes the age of reasoning man
More memorable than a beast's, depend
On this—that Right should fence itself inviolably
With power; in which respect the state of England
From usurpation by the insolent commons
Cries for reform.
Get treason, and spare treasure. Fee with coin
The loudest murmurers; feed with jealousies
Opposing factions,—be thyself of none;
And borrow gold of many, for those who lend
Will serve thee till thou payest them; and thus
Keep the fierce spirit of the hour at bay,
Till time, amid its coming generations
Of nights and days unborn, bring some one chance,
. . . . . .
Or war or pestilence or Nature's self,
By some distemperature or terrible sign,
Be as an arbiter betwixt themselves.
. . . Nor let your Majesty
Doubt here the peril of the unseen event.
How did your brother kings, coheritors
In your high interest in the subject earth,
Rise past such troubles to that height of power
Where now they sit, and awfully serene
Smile on the trembling world? Such popular storms
Philip the second of Spain, this Lewis of France,
And late the German head of many bodies,
And every petty lord of Italy,
Quelled or by arts or arms. Is England poorer
Or feebler? or art thou who wield'st her power
Tamer than they? or shall this island be—
[Girdled] by its inviolable waters—
To the world present and the world to come

Sole pattern of extinguished monarchy?
Not if thou dost as I would have thee do.
King. Your words shall be my deeds:
You speak the image of my thought. My friend
(If kings can have a friend, I call thee so),
Beyond the large commission which belongs (?)
Under the great seal of the realm, take this:
And, for some obvious reasons, let there be
No seal on it, except my kingly word
And honour as I am a gentleman.
Be—as thou art within my heart and mind—
Another self, here and in Ireland:
Do what thou judgest well, take amplest license,
And stick not even at questionable means.
Hear me, Wentworth. My word is as a wall
Between thee and this world thine enemy—
That hates thee, for thou lovest me.
Strafford. I own
No friend but thee, no enemies but thine:
Thy lightest thought is my eternal law.
How weak, how short, is life to pay . .
King. Peace, peace!
Thou ow'st me nothing yet.—[*To Laud*]. My lord, what say
Those papers?
Laud. Your Majesty has ever interposed,
In lenity towards your native soil,
Between the heavy vengeance of the Church
And Scotland. Mark the consequence of warming
This brood of northern vipers in your bosom.
The rabble, instructed no doubt
By Loudon, Lindsay, Hume, and false Argyll,
(For the waves never menace heaven until
Scourged by the wind's invisible tyranny)
Have in the very temple of the Lord
Done outrage to His chosen ministers.
They scorn the liturgy of the holy Church,
Refuse to obey her canons, and deny
The apostolic power with which the Spirit
Has filled its elect vessels, even from him
Who held the keys with power to loose and bind,
To him who now pleads in this royal presence.—

Let ampler powers and new instructions be
Sent to the High Commissioners in Scotland.
To death, imprisonment, and confiscation,
Add torture, add the ruin of the kindred
Of the offender, add the brand of infamy,
Add mutilation: and, if this suffice not,
Unleash the sword and fire, that, in their thirst,
They may lick up that scum of schismatics.
I laugh at those weak rebels who, desiring
What we possess, still prate of Christian peace:
As if those dreadful arbitrating messengers
Which play the part of God 'twixt right and wrong
Should be let loose against the innocent sleep
Of templed cities and the smiling fields
For some poor argument of policy
Which touches our own profit or our pride
(Where it indeed were Christian charity
To turn the cheek even to the smiter's hand);
And, when our great Redeemer, when our God,
When He who gave, accepted, and retained,
Himself in propitiation of our sins,
Is scorned in His immediate ministry,
With hazard of the inestimable loss
Of all the truth and discipline which is
Salvation to the extremest generation
Of men innumerable, they talk of peace!
Such peace as Canaan found, let Scotland now:
For, by that Christ who came to bring a sword,
Not peace, upon the earth, and gave command
To his disciples at the passover
That each should sell his robe and buy a sword,—
Once strip that minister of naked wrath,
And it shall never sleep in peace again
Till Scotland bend or break.

King. My Lord Archbishop,
Do what thou wilt and what thou canst in this.
Thy earthly even as thy heavenly King
Gives thee large power in his unquiet realm.
But we want money, and my mind misgives me
That for so great an enterprise, as yet,
We are unfurnished.

Strafford. Yet it may not long

Rest on our wills.

Cottington. The expenses
Of gathering shipmoney, and of distraining
For every petty rate (for we encounter
A desperate opposition inch by inch
In every warehouse and on every farm),
Have swallowed up the gross sum of the imposts;
So that, though felt as a most grievous scourge
Upon the land, they stand us in small stead
As touches the receipt.

Strafford. 'Tis a conclusion
Most arithmetical: and thence you infer
Perhaps the assembling of a parliament.
Now, if a man should call his dearest enemies
To sit in licensed judgment on his life,
His Majesty might wisely take that course.
[*Aside to Cottington.*] It is enough to expect from these lean imposts
That they perform the office of a scourge,
Without more profit. [*Aloud.*] Fines and confiscations.
And a forced loan from the refractory city,
Will fill our coffers: and the golden love
Of loyal gentlemen and noble friends
For the worshiped father of our common country,
With contributions from the catholics,
Will make Rebellion pale in our excess.
Be these the expedients until time and wisdom
Shall frame a settled state of government.

Laud. And weak expedients they! Have we not drained
All, till the . . . which seemed
A mine exhaustless?

Strafford. And the love which *is*,
If loyal hearts could turn their blood to gold.

Laud. Both now grow barren: and I speak it not
As loving parliaments, which, as they have been
In the right hand of bold bad mighty kings
The scourges of the bleeding Church, I hate.
Methinks they scarcely can deserve our fear.

Strafford. O my dear liege, take back the wealth thou gavest:
With that, take all I held, but as in trust
For thee, of mine inheritance: leave me but
This unprovided body for thy service,

And a mind dedicated to no care
Except thy safety:—but assemble not
A parliament. Hundreds will bring, like me,
Their fortunes, as they would their blood, before . . .
King. No! thou who judgest them art but one. Alas!
We should be too much out of love with heaven,
Did this vile world show many such as thee,
Thou perfect just and honourable man!
Never shall it be said that Charles of England
Stripped those he loved for fear of those he scorns;
Nor will he so much misbecome his throne
As to impoverish those who most adorn
And best defend it. That you urge, dear Strafford,
Inclines me rather . . .
Queen. To a parliament?
Is this thy firmness? and thou wilt preside
Over a knot of . . . censurers,
To the unswearing of thy best resolves,
And choose the worst, when the worst comes too soon?
Plight not the worst before the worst must come.
Oh wilt thou smile whilst our ribald foes,
Dressed in their own usurped authority,
Sharpen their tongues on Henrietta's fame?
It is enough! Thou lovest me no more! [*Weeps.*]
King. Oh Henrietta! [*They talk apart.*]
Cottington [*to Laud*]. Money we have none:
And all the expedients of my Lord of Strafford
Will scarcely meet the arrears.
Laud. Without delay
An army must be sent into the north;
Followed by a Commission of the Church,
With amplest power to quench in fire and blood,
And tears and terror, and the pity of hell,
The intenser wrath of Heresy. God will give
Victory; and victory over Scotland give
The lion England tamed into our hands.
That will lend power, and power bring gold.
Cottington. Meanwhile
We must begin first where your Grace leaves off.
Gold must give power, or . . .
Laud. I am not averse

From the assembling of a parliament.
Strong actions and smooth words might teach them soon
The lesson to obey. And are they not
A bubble fashioned by the monarch's mouth,
The birth of one light breath? If they serve no purpose,
A word dissolves them.

Strafford. The engine of parliaments
Might be deferred until I can bring over
The Irish regiments: they will serve to assure
The issue of the war against the Scots.
And, this game won—which if lost, all is lost—
Gather these chosen leaders of the rebels,
And call them, if you will, a parliament.

King. Oh be our feet still tardy to shed blood,
Guilty though it may be! I would still spare
The stubborn country of my birth, and ward
From countenances which I loved in youth
The wrathful Church's lacerating hand:
[*To Laud.*] Have you o'erlooked the other articles?

[*Re-enter* ARCHY.]

Laud. Hazlerig, Hampden, Pym, young Harry Vane,
Cromwell, and other rebels of less note,
Intend to sail with the next favouring wind
For the Plantations.

Archy. Where they think to found
A commonwealth like Gonzalo's in the play,
Gynæocœnic and pantisocratic.

King. What's that, sirrah?

Archy. New devil's politics.
Hell is the pattern of all commonwealths:
Lucifer was the first republican.
Will you hear Merlin's prophecy, how three posts (?)

"In one brainless skull, when the whitethorn is full,
Shall sail round the world, and come back again:
Shall sail round the world in a brainless skull,
And come back again when the moon is at full:"—

When, in spite of the Church,
They will hear homilies of whatever length
Or form they please.

Cottington (?) So please your Majesty to sign this order
For their detention.

Archy. If your Majesty were tormented night and day by fever, gout, rheumatism, and stone, and asthma, &c., and you found these diseases had secretly entered into a conspiracy to abandon you, should you think it necessary to lay an embargo on the port by which they meant to dispeople your unquiet kingdom of man?

King. If fear were made for kings, the Fool mocks wisely;
But in this case . . [*writing*] Here, my lord, take the warrant,
And see it duly executed forthwith.—
That imp of malice and mockery shall be punished.

[*Exeunt all but King, Queen, and Archy.*]

Archy. Ay, I am the physician of whom Plato prophesied, who was to be accused by the confectioner before a jury of children, who found him guilty without waiting for the summing-up, and hanged him without benefit of clergy. Thus Baby Charles, and the Twelfth-night Queen of Hearts, and the overgrown schoolboy Cottington, and that little urchin Laud—who would reduce a verdict of "guilty, death," by famine, if it were impregnable by composition—all impannelled against poor Archy for presenting them bitter physic the last day of the holidays.

Queen. Is the rain over, sirrah?

King. When it rains
And the sun shines, 'twill rain again to-morrow:
And therefore never smile till you've done crying.

Archy. But 'tis all over now: like the April anger of woman, the gentle sky has wept itself serene.

Queen. What news abroad? how looks the world this morning?

Archy. Gloriously as a grave covered with virgin flowers. There's a rainbow in the sky. Let your Majesty look at it, for

"A rainbow in the morning
Is the shepherd's warning;"

and the flocks of which you are the pastor are scattered among the mountain-tops, where every drop of water is a flake of snow, and the breath of May pierces like a January blast.

King. The sheep have mistaken the wolf for their shepherd, my poor boy; and the shepherd, the wolves for the watchdogs.

Queen. But the rainbow was a good sign, Archy: it says that the waters of the deluge are gone, and can return no more.

Archy. Ay, the salt-water one: but that of tears and blood must yet come down, and that of fire follow, if there be any truth in lies.—The rainbow hung over the city with all its shops, . . and churches, from north to south, like a bridge of congregated lightning pieced by the masonry of heaven—like a balance in which the angel that distributes

the coming hour was weighing that heavy one whose poise is now felt in the lightest hearts, before it bows the proudest heads under the meanest feet.

Queen. Who taught you this trash, sirrah?

Archy. A torn leaf out of an old book trampled in the dirt.—But for the rainbow. It moved as the sun moved, and . . until the top of the Tower . . of a cloud through its left-hand tip, and Lambeth Palace look as dark as a rock before the other. Methought I saw a crown figured upon one tip, and a mitre on the other. So, as I had heard treasures were found where the rainbow quenches its points upon the earth, I set off, and at the Tower ——. But I shall not tell your Majesty what I found close to the closet-window on which the rainbow had glimmered.

King. Speak: I will make my Fool my conscience.

Archy. Then conscience is a fool.—I saw there a cat caught in a rat-trap. I heard the rats squeak behind the wainscots: it seemed to me that the very mice were consulting on the manner of her death.

Queen. Archy is shrewd and bitter.

Archy. Like the season,
so blow the winds.—But at the other end of the rainbow, where the grey rain was tempered along the grass and leaves by a tender interfusion of violet and gold in the meadows beyond Lambeth, what think you that I found instead of a mitre?

King. Vane's wits perhaps.

Archy. Something as vain. I saw
a gross vapour hovering in a stinking ditch over the carcass of a dead ass, some rotten rags, and broken dishes—the wrecks of what once administered to the stuffing-out and the ornament of a worm of worms. His Grace of Canterbury expects to enter the New Jerusalem some Palm Sunday in triumph on the ghost of this ass.

Queen. Enough, enough! Go desire Lady Jane
She place my lute, together with the music
Mari received last week from Italy,
In my boudoir, and . . [*Exit Archy.*]

King. I'll go in.

Queen. My beloved lord,
Have you not noted that the Fool of late
Has lost his careless mirth, and that his words
Sound like the echoes of our saddest fears?
What can it mean? I should be loth to think
Some factious slave had tutored him.

King. Oh no!
He is but Occasion's pupil. Partly 'tis
That our minds piece the vacant intervals
Of his wild words with their own fashioning,—
As in the imagery of summer clouds,
Or coals of the winter fire, idlers find
The perfect shadows of their teeming thoughts;
And, partly, that the terrors of the time
Are sown by wandering Rumour in all spirits,
And in the lightest and the least may best
Be seen the current of the coming wind.
Queen. Your brain is overwrought with these deep thoughts.
Come, I will sing to you; let us go try
These airs from Italy; and, as we pass
The gallery, we 'll decide where that Correggio
Shall hang—the Virgin Mother
With her child, born the King of heaven and earth,
Whose reign is men's salvation. And you shall see
A cradled miniature of yourself asleep,
Stamped on the heart by never-erring love;
Liker than any Vandyke ever made,
A pattern to the unborn age of thee,
Over whose sweet beauty I have wept for joy
A thousand times,—and now should weep for sorrow,
Did I not think that after we were dead
Our fortunes would spring high in him, and that
The cares we waste upon our heavy crown
Would make it light and glorious as a wreath
Of heaven's beams for his dear innocent brow.
King. Dear Henrietta!

SCENE III.—*The Star Chamber.* LAUD, JUXON, STRAFFORD, *and others, as Judges.* PRYNNE *as a Prisoner, and then* BASTWICK.

Laud. Bring forth the prisoner Bastwick: let the clerk
Recite his sentence.
Clerk. "That he pay five thousand
Pounds to the king, lose both his ears, be branded
With red-hot iron on the cheek and forehead,
And be imprisoned within Lancaster Castle
During the pleasure of the Court."

Laud. Prisoner,
If you have aught to say wherefore this sentence
Should not be put into effect, now speak.
Juxon. If you have aught to plead in mitigation,
Speak.
Bastwick. Thus, my lords. If, like the prelates, I
Were an invader of the royal power,
A public scorner of the word of God,
Profane, idolatrous, popish, superstitious,
Impious in heart and in tyrannic act,
Void of wit, honesty, and temperance;
If Satan were my lord, as theirs,—our God
Pattern of all I should avoid to do;
Were I an enemy of my God and King
And of good men, as ye are;—I should merit
Your fearful state and gilt prosperity,
Which, when ye wake from the last sleep, shall turn
To cowls and robes of everlasting fire.
But, as I am, I bid ye grudge me not
The only earthly favour ye can yield,
Or I think worth acceptance at your hands,—
Scorn, mutilation, and imprisonment.
. . . Even as my Master did,
Until Heaven's kingdom shall descend on earth,
Or earth be like a shadow in the light
Of Heaven absorbed. Some few tumultuous years
Will pass, and leave no wreck of what opposes
His will whose will is power.
Laud. Officer, take the prisoner from the bar,
And be his tongue slit for his insolence.
Bastwick. While this hand holds a pen . . . .
Laud. Be his hands . . . .
Juxon. Stop!
Forbear, my lord! The tongue, which now can speak
No terror, would interpret, being dumb,
Heaven's thunder to our harm; . . . .
And hands, which now write only their own shame,
With bleeding stumps might sign our blood away.
Laud. Much more such "mercy" among men would be,
Did all the ministers of Heaven's revenge
Flinch thus from earthly retribution. I

Could suffer what I would inflict. [*Exit Bastwick guarded*]. Bring up
The Lord Bishop of Lincoln.—[*To Strafford*] Know you not
That, in distraining for ten thousand pounds
Upon his books and furniture at Lincoln,
Were found these scandalous and seditious letters
Sent from one Osbaldistone, who is fled?
I speak it not as touching this poor person;
But of the office which should make it holy,
Were it as vile as it was ever spotless.
Mark too, my lord, that this expression strikes
His Majesty, if I misinterpret not.

Enter BISHOP WILLIAMS *guarded.*

Strafford. 'Twere politic and just that Williams taste
The bitter fruit of his connexion with
The schismatics. But you, my Lord Archbishop,
Who owed your first promotion to his favour,
Who grew beneath his smile——

Laud. Would therefore beg
The office of his judge from this High Court,—
That it shall seem, even as it is, that I,
In my assumption of this sacred robe,
Have put aside all worldly preference,
All sense of all distinction of all persons,
All thoughts but of the service of the Church.—
Bishop of Lincoln!

Williams. Peace, proud hierarch!
I know my sentence, and I own it just.
Thou wilt repay me less than I deserve,
In stretching to the utmost

. . . . . .

SCENE IV.—HAMPDEN, PYM, CROMWELL, *his Daughter, and young* SIR HARRY VANE.

Hampden. England, farewell! Thou, who hast been my cradle,
Shalt never be my dungeon or my grave!
I held what I inherited in thee
As pawn for that inheritance of freedom
Which thou hast sold for thy despoiler's smile:

How can I call thee England, or my country?—
Does the wind hold?
Vane. The vanes sit steady
Upon the Abbey-towers. The silver lightnings
Of the evening star, spite of the city's smoke,
Tell that the north wind reigns in the upper air.
Mark too that fleet of fleecy-wingèd cloud
Sailing athwart St. Margaret's.
Hampden. Hail, fleet herald
Of tempest! that rude pilot who shall guide
Hearts free as his to realms as pure as thee,
Beyond the shot of tyranny,
Beyond the webs of that swoln spider. . . . .
Beyond the curses, calumnies, and lies (?)
Of atheist priests! . . And thou
Fair star, whose beam lies on the wide Atlantic,
Athwart its zones of tempest and of calm,
Bright as the path to a belovèd home,
Oh light us to the isles of the evening land!
Like floating Edens cradled in the glimmer
Of sunset, through the distant mist of years
Touched by departing hope, they gleam! lone regions,
Where power's poor dupes and victims yet have never
Propitiated the savage fear of kings
With purest blood of noblest hearts; whose dew
Is yet unstained with tears of those who wake
To weep each day the wrongs on which it dawns;
Whose sacred silent air owns yet no echo
Of formal blasphemies; nor impious rites
Wrest man's free worship, from the God who loves,
To the poor worm who envies us his love!
Receive, thou young . . . of paradise,
These exiles from the old and sinful world!

. . . . . .

This glorious clime; this firmament, whose lights
Dart mitigated influence through their veil
Of pale-blue atmosphere, whose tears keep green
The pavement of this moist all-feeding earth;
This vaporous horizon, whose dim round
Is bastioned by the circumfluous sea,
Repelling invasion from the sacred towers;

Presses upon me like a dungeon's grate,
A low dark roof, a damp and narrow wall.
The boundless universe
Becomes a cell too narrow for the soul
That owns a master; while the loathliest ward
Of this wide prison, England, is a nest
Of cradling peace built on the mountain tops,—
To which the eagle spirits of the free,
Which range through heaven and earth, and scorn the storm
Of time, and gaze upon the light of truth,
Return to brood on thoughts that cannot die
And cannot be repelled.
Like eaglets floating in the heaven of time,
They soar above their quarry, and shall stoop
Through palaces and temples thunderproof.

SCENE V.

Archy. I'll go live under the ivy that overgrows the terrace, and court the tears shed on its old roots (?), as the [wind ?] plays the song of

"A widow bird sate mourning
Upon a wintry bough."

[*Sings*] Heigho! the lark and the owl!
One flies the morning, and one lulls the night:—
Only the nightingale, poor fond soul,
Sings like the fool through darkness and light.

"A widow bird sate mourning for her love
Upon a wintry bough;
The frozen wind crept on above,
The freezing stream below.

There was no leaf upon the forest bare,
No flower upon the ground,
And little motion in the air
Except the mill-wheel's sound."

1822.

XCV.

LINES.

I.

We meet not as we parted;
We feel more than all may see;
My bosom is heavy-hearted,
And thine full of doubt for me.
One moment has bound the free.

II.

That moment is gone for ever;
Like lightning that flashed and died,
Like a snowflake upon the river,
Like a sunbeam upon the tide,
Which the dark shadows hide.

III.

That moment from time was singled
As the first of a life of pain;
The cup of its joy was mingled
—Delusion too sweet though vain!
Too sweet to be mine again.

IV.

Sweet lips, could my heart have hidden
That its life was crushed by you,
Ye would not have then forbidden
The death which a heart so true
Sought in your briny dew.

V.

Methinks too little cost
For a moment so found, so lost!

1822.

XCVI.

Bright wanderer, fair coquette of heaven,
To whom alone it has been given
To change and be adored for ever,
Envy not this dim world, for never
But once within its shadow grew
One fair as ——

1822.

XCVII.

THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE.

SWIFT as a spirit hastening to his task
Of glory and of good, the Sun sprang forth
Rejoicing in his splendour, and the mask

Of darkness fell from the awakened earth.
The smokeless altars of the mountain snows
Flamed above crimson clouds, and at the birth

Of light the ocean's orison arose,
To which the birds tempered their matin lay.
All flowers in field or forest which unclose

Their trembling eyelids to the kiss of day,
Swinging their censers in the element,
With orient incense lit by the new ray

Burned slow and inconsumably, and sent
Their odorous sighs up to the smiling air;
And, in succession due, did continent,

Isle, ocean, and all things that in them wear
The form and character of mortal mould,
Rise as the Sun their father rose, to bear

Their portion of the toil which he of old
Took as his own, and then imposed on them.
But I, whom thoughts which must remain untold

Had kept as wakeful as the stars that gem
The cone of night, now they were laid asleep
Stretched my faint limbs beneath the hoary stem

Which an old chesnut flung athwart the steep
Of a green Apennine. Before me fled
The night; behind me rose the day; the deep

Was at my feet, and heaven above my head;—
When a strange trance over my fancy grew,
Which was not slumber, for the shade it spread

Was so transparent that the scene came through
As clear as, when a veil of light is drawn
O'er evening hills, they glimmer; and I knew

That I had felt the freshness of that dawn
Bathe in the same cold dew my brow and hair,
And sate as thus upon that slope of lawn

Under the selfsame bough, and heard as there
The birds, the fountains, and the ocean, hold
Sweet talk in music through the enamoured air.
And then a vision on my brain was rolled.

As in that trance of wondrous thought I lay,
This was the tenour of my waking dream.—
Methought I sate beside a public way

Thick strewn with summer dust; and a great stream
Of people there was hurrying to and fro,
Numerous as gnats upon the evening gleam,—

All hastening onward, yet none seemed to know
Whither he went, or whence he came, or why
He made one of the multitude, and so

Was borne amid the crowd as through the sky
One of the million leaves of summer's bier.
Old age and youth, manhood and infancy,

Mixed in one mighty torrent did appear:
Some flying from the thing they feared, and some
Seeking the object of another's fear.

And others, as with steps towards the tomb,
Poured on the trodden worms that crawled beneath;
And others mournfully within the gloom

Of their own shadow walked, and called it death;
And some fled from it as it were a ghost,
Half fainting in the affliction of vain breath.

But more, with motions which each other crossed,
Pursued or spurned the shadows the clouds threw,
Or birds within the noonday ether lost,

Upon that path where flowers never grew,—
And, weary with vain toil and faint for thirst,
Heard not the fountains whose melodious dew

Out of their mossy cells for ever burst,
Nor felt the breeze which from the forest told
Of grassy paths, and wood lawn-interspersed,

With overarching elms, and caverns cold,
And violet-banks where sweet dreams brood;—but they
Pursued their serious folly as of old.

And, as I gazed, methought that in the way
The throng grew wilder, as the woods of June
When the south wind shakes the extinguished day;

And a cold glare, intenser than the noon
But icy cold, obscured with blinding light
The sun, as he the stars. Like the young moon—

When on the sunlit limits of the night
Her white shell trembles amid crimson air,
And whilst the sleeping tempest gathers might—

Doth, as the herald of its coming, bear
The ghost of her dead mother, whose dim form
Bends in dark ether from her infant's chair:

So came a chariot on the silent storm
Of its own rushing splendour; and a Shape
So sate within, as one whom years deform,

Beneath a dusky hood and double cape,
Crouching within the shadow of a tomb.
And o'er what seemed the head a cloud-like crape

Was bent, a dun and faint etherial gloom
Tempering the light. Upon the chariot beam
A Janus-visaged Shadow did assume

The guidance of that wonder-winged team.
The shapes which drew it in thick lightenings
Were lost:—I heard alone on the air's soft stream

The music of their ever-moving wings.
All the four faces of that Charioteer
Had their eyes banded. Little profit brings

Speed in the van and blindness in the rear,
Nor then avail the beams that quench the sun:
Or *that* with banded eyes could pierce the sphere

Of all that is, has been, or will be, done.
So ill was the car guided—but it passed
With solemn speed majestically on.

The crowd gave way; and I arose aghast,
Or seemed to rise, so mighty was the trance,
And saw, like clouds upon the thunder's blast,

The million with fierce song and maniac dance
Raging around. Such seemed the jubilee
As when, to meet some conqueror's advance,

Imperial Rome poured forth her living sea
From senate-house and forum and theatre,
When . . . . upon the free

Had bound a yoke which soon they stooped to bear.
Nor wanted here the just similitude
Of a triumphal pageant, for, where'er

The chariot rolled, a captive multitude
Was driven:—all those who had grown old in power
Or misery; all who had their age subdued

By action or by suffering, and whose hour
Was drained to its last sand in weal or woe,
So that the trunk survived both fruit and flower;

All those whose fame or infamy must grow
Till the great winter lay the form and name
Of this green earth with them for ever low;

All but the sacred few who could not tame
Their spirits to the conquerors, but, as soon
As they had touched the world with living flame,

Fled back like eagles to their native noon,
Or those who put aside the diadem
Of earthly thrones or gems . . .

Were there, of Athens or Jerusalem,
Were neither mid the mighty captives seen,
Nor 'mid the ribald crowd that followed them,

Nor those who went before fierce and obscene.
The wild dance maddens in the van; and those
Who lead it, fleet as shadows on the green,

Outspeed the chariot, and without repose
Mix with each other in tempestuous measure
To savage music, wilder as it grows.

They, tortured by their agonizing pleasure,
  Convulsed, and on the rapid whirlwinds spun
Of that fierce Spirit whose unholy leisure

  Was soothed by mischief since the world begun,
Throw back their heads and loose their streaming hair;
  And, in their dance round her who dims the sun,

Maidens and youths fling their wild arms in air.
  As their feet twinkle, they recede,—and now
Bending within each other's atmosphere,

  Kindle invisibly, and, as they glow,
Like moths by light attracted and repelled,
  Oft to their bright destruction come and go;

Till (like two clouds into one vale impelled,
  That shake the mountains when their lightnings mingle,
And die in rain) the fiery band which held

  Their natures snaps—the shock still may tingle.
One falls, and then another, in the path,
  Senseless—nor is the desolation single.

Yet, ere I can say *where*, the chariot hath
  Passed over them—nor other trace I find
But as of foam after the ocean's wrath

  Is spent upon the desert shore. Behind,
Old men and women, foully disarrayed,
  Shake their gray hairs in the insulting wind;

And follow in the dance with limbs decayed,
  Limping to reach the light which leaves them still
Farther behind and deeper in the shade.

  But not the less with impotence of will
They wheel (though ghastly shadows interpose
  Round them and round each other), and fulfil

Their work, and in the dust from whence they rose
  Sink, and corruption veils them as they lie,
And past in these performs what . . in those.—

  Struck to the heart by this sad pageantry,
Half to myself I said: "And what is this?
  Whose shape is that within the car?—And why"

(I would have added) "is all here amiss?"—
But a voice answered—"Life!"—I turned, and knew
(O Heaven, have mercy on such wretchedness!)

That what I thought was an old root which grew
To strange distortion out of the hill side
Was indeed one of that deluded crew;

And that the grass which methought hung so wide
And white was but his thin discoloured hair;
And that the holes it vainly sought to hide

Were or had been eyes.—"If thou canst, forbear
To join the dance, which I had well forborne,"
Said the grim Feature (of my thought aware).

"I will unfold that which to this deep scorn
Led me and my companions, and relate
The progress of the pageant since the morn.

"If thirst of knowledge shall not then abate,
Follow it thou even to the night; but I
Am weary."—Then, like one who with the weight

Of his own words is staggered, wearily
He paused; and, ere he could resume, I cried,
"First, who art thou?"—"Before thy memory,

"I feared, loved, hated, suffered, did, and died;
And, if the spark with which Heaven lit my spirit
Had been with purer sentiment supplied,

"Corruption would not now thus much inherit
Of what was once Rousseau,—nor this disguise
Stain that which ought to have disdained to wear it.

"If I have been extinguished, yet there rise
A thousand beacons from the spark I bore."
"And who are those chained to the car?" "The wise,

"The great, the unforgotten,—they who wore
Mitres and helms and crowns, or wreaths of light,
Signs of thought's empire over thought. Their lore

"Taught them not this, to know themselves; their might
Could not repress the mystery within;
And, for the morn of truth they feigned, deep night

"Caught them ere evening." "Who is he with chin
Upon his breast, and hands crossed on his chain?"
The child of a fierce hour. He sought to win

"The world, and lost all that it did contain
Of greatness, in its hope destroyed; and more
Of fame and peace than virtue's self can gain

"Without the opportunity which bore
Him on its eagle pinions to the peak
From which a thousand climbers have before

"Fallen, as Napoleon fell." I felt my cheek
Alter to see the shadow pass away
Whose grasp had left the giant world so weak

That every pygmy kicked it as it lay.
And much I grieved to think how power and will
In opposition rule our mortal day,

And why God made irreconcileable
Good and the means of good; and for despair
I half disdained mine eyes' desire to fill

With the spent vision of the times that were,
And scarce have ceased to be.—"Dost thou behold,"
Said my guide, "those spoilers spoiled, Voltaire,

"Frederick and Paul, Catherine and Leopold,
And hoary anarchs, demagogues, and sage—
——names which the world thinks always old?

"For, in the battle Life and they did wage,
She remained conqueror. I was overcome
By my own heart alone, which neither age

"Nor tears nor infamy, nor now the tomb,
Could temper to its object."—"Let them pass!"
I cried. "The world and its mysterious doom

"Is not so much more glorious than it was
That I desire to worship those who drew
New figures on its false and fragile glass

"As the old faded."—"Figures ever new
Rise on the bubble, paint them as you may;
We have but thrown, as those before us threw,

"Our shadows on it as it passed away.—
But mark how chained to the triumphal chair
The mighty phantoms of an elder day.

"All that is mortal of great Plato there
Expiates the joy and woe his Master knew not.
The star that ruled his doom was far too fair;

"And life, where long that flower of heaven grew not,
Conquered that heart, by love, which gold or pain
Or age or sloth or slavery could subdue not.

"And near him walk the . . . twain,—
The Tutor, and his Pupil whom dominion
Followed as tame as vulture in a chain.

"The world was darkened beneath either pinion
Of him whom from the flock of conquerors
Fame singled out for her thunder-bearing minion;

"The other long outlived both woes and wars,
Throned in the thoughts of men; and still had kept
The jealous key of truth's eternal doors,

"If Bacon's eagle spirit had not leapt
Like lightning out of darkness. He compelled
The Proteus shape of Nature, as it slept,

"To wake, and lead him to the caves that held
The treasure of the secrets of its reign.—
See the great Bards of elder time, who quelled

"The passions which they sung, as by their strain
May well be known: their living melody
Tempers its own contagion to the vein

"Of those who are infected with it. I
Have suffered what I wrote, or viler pain;
And so my words have seeds of misery."—

. . . .

He pointed to a company

'Midst whom I quickly recognized the heirs
Of Cæsar's crime, from him to Constantine;
The anarch chiefs, whose force and murderous snares

Had founded many a sceptre-bearing line,
And spread the plague of gold and blood abroad;
And Gregory and John, and men divine

Who rose like shadows between man and God,
Till that eclipse, still hanging over heaven,
Was worshiped, by the world o'er which they strode,

For the true sun it quenched. "Their power was given
But to destroy," replied the leader :—"I
Am one of those who have created, even

"If it be but a world of agony."
"Whence comest thou, and whither goest thou?
How did thy course begin," I said, "and why?

"Mine eyes are sick of this perpetual flow
Of people, and my heart sick of one sad thought:—
Speak!"—"Whence I am, I partly seem to know;

"And how and by what paths I have been brought
To this dread pass, methinks even thou mayst guess.
Why this should be, my mind can compass not;

"Whither the conqueror hurries me, still less.
But follow thou, and from spectator turn
Actor or victim in this wretchedness;

"And what thou wouldst be taught I then may learn
From thee. Now listen:—In the April prime,
When all the forest tips began to burn

"With kindling green, touched by the azure clime
Of the young year's dawn, I was laid asleep
Under a mountain which from unknown time

"Had yawned into a cavern high and deep.
And from it came a gentle rivulet,
Whose water, like clear air, in its calm sweep

"Bent the soft grass, and kept for ever wet
The stems of the sweet flowers, and filled the grove
With sounds which whoso hears must needs forget

"All pleasure and all pain, all hate and love,
Which he had known before that hour of rest.
A sleeping mother then would dream not of

"Her only child who died upon her breast
At eventide; a king would mourn no more
The crown of which his brows were dispossessed

"When the sun lingered o'er his ocean floor
To gild his rival's new prosperity;
Thou wouldst forget thus vainly to deplore

"Ills which, if ills, can find no cure from thee,
The thought of which no other sleep will quell,
Nor other music blot from memory;—

"So sweet and deep is the oblivious spell.
And whether life had been before that sleep
The heaven which I imagine, or a hell

"Like this harsh world in which I wake to weep,
I know not. I arose; and for a space
The scene of woods and waters seemed to keep,

Though it was now broad day, a gentle trace
Of light diviner than the common sun
Sheds on the common earth, and all the place

"Was filled with magic sounds woven into one
Oblivious melody, confusing sense
Amid the gliding waves and shadows dun.

"And, as I looked, the bright omnipresence
Of morning through the orient cavern flowed,
And the sun's image radiantly intense

"Burned on the waters of the well that glowed
Like gold, and threaded all the forest's maze
With winding paths of emerald fire. There stood

"Amid the sun,—as he amid the blaze
Of his own glory, on the vibrating
Floor of the fountain paved with flashing rays—

"A Shape all light, which with one hand did fling
Dew on the earth, as if she were the dawn,
And the invisible rain did ever sing

"A silver music on the mossy lawn;
And still before me on the dusky grass
Iris her many-coloured scarf had drawn.

"In her right hand she bore a crystal glass,
Mantling with bright nepenthe; the fierce splendour
Fell from her as she moved under the mass

"Out of the deep cavern, with palms so tender
Their tread broke not the mirror of its billow.
She glided along the river, and did bend her

"Head under the dark boughs; till, like a willow,
Her fair hair swept the bosom of the stream
That whispered with delight to be its pillow.

"As one enamoured is upborne in dream
O'er lily-paven lakes 'mid silver mist,
To wondrous music,—so this shape might seem

"Partly to tread the waves with feet which kissed
The dancing foam, partly to glide along
The air which roughened the moist amethyst,

"Or the faint morning beams that fell among
The trees, or the soft shadows of the trees.
And her feet, ever to the ceaseless song

"Of leaves and winds and waves and birds and bees
And falling drops, moved to a measure new,—
Yet sweet, as on the summer evening breeze,

"Up from the lake, a shape of golden dew,
Between two rocks, athwart the rising moon,
Dances i' the wind, where never eagle flew.

"And still her feet, no less than the sweet tune
To which they moved, seemed as they moved to blot
The thoughts of him who gazed on them. And soon

"All that was seemed as if it had been not;
And all the gazer's mind was strewn beneath
Her feet like embers; and she, thought by thought,

"Trampled its sparks into the dust of death,—
As Day upon the threshold of the east
Treads out the lamps of night, until the breath

"Of darkness re-illumine even the least
Of heaven's living eyes. Like day she came,
Making the night a dream. And, ere she ceased

"To move, as one between desire and shame
Suspended, I said: 'If, as it doth seem,
Thou comest from the realm without a name

" 'Into this valley of perpetual dream,
Show whence I came, and where I am, and why—
Pass not away upon the passing stream.'

" 'Arise and quench thy thirst,' was her reply.
And, as a shut lily stricken by the wand
Of dewy morning's vital alchemy,

"I rose; and, bending at her sweet command,
Touched with faint lips the cup she raised.
And suddenly my brain became as sand

"Where the first wave had more than half erased
The track of deer on desert Labrador,
Whilst the wolf, from which they fled amazed,

"Leaves his stamp visibly upon the shore
Until the second bursts;—so on my sight
Burst a new vision never seen before.

"And the fair shape waned in the coming light,
As veil by veil the silent splendour drops
From Lucifer amid the chrysolite

"Of sunrise ere it tinge the mountain tops.
And, as the presence of that fairest planet,
Although unseen, is felt by one who hopes

"That his day's path may end, as he began it,
In that star's smile whose light is like the scent
Of a jonquil when evening breezes fan it,

"Or the soft note in which his dear lament
The Brescian shepherd breathes, or the caress
That turned his weary slumber to content,—

"So knew I in that light's severe excess
The presence of that shape which on the stream
Moved, as I moved along the wilderness,

"More dimly than a day-appearing dream,
The ghost of a forgotten form of sleep,
A light of heaven whose half-extinguished beam

"Through the sick day in which we wake to weep
Glimmers, for ever sought, for ever lost.
So did that shape its obscure tenour keep

"Beside my path, as silent as a ghost.
But the new Vision, and the cold bright car,
With solemn speed and stunning music, crossed

"The forest; and, as if from some dread war
Triumphantly returning, the loud million
Fiercely extolled the fortune of her star.

"A moving arch of victory the vermilion
And green and azure plumes of Iris had
Built high over her wind-winged pavilion;

"And underneath etherial glory clad
The wilderness; and far before her flew
The tempest of the splendour which forbade

"Shadow to fall from leaf and stone. The crew
Seemed, in that light, like atomies to dance
Within a sunbeam. Some upon the new

"Embroidery of flowers, that did enhance
The grassy vesture of the desert, played,
Forgetful of the chariot's swift advance;

"Others stood gazing, till within the shade
Of the great mountain its light left them dim;
Others outspeeded it; and others made

"Circles around it, like the clouds that swim
Round the high moon in a bright sea of air;
And more did follow, with exulting hymn,

"The chariot and the captives fettered there.
But all, like bubbles on an eddying flood,
Fell into the same track at last, and were

"Borne onward. I among the multitude
Was swept. Me sweetest flowers delayed not long;
Me, not the shadow nor the solitude;

"Me, not that falling stream's lethean song;
Me, not the phantom of that early form
Which moved upon its motion:—but among

"The thickest billows of that living storm
I plunged, and bared my bosom to the clime
Of that cold light whose airs too soon deform.

"Before the chariot had begun to climb
The opposing steep of that mysterious dell,
Behold a wonder worthy of the rhyme

"Of him whom from the lowest depths of hell,
Through every paradise and through all glory,
Love led serene, and who returned to tell

"The world of hate and care the wondrous story
How all things are transfigured except Love;
For, deaf as is a sea which wrath makes hoary,

"The world can hear not the sweet notes that move
The sphere whose light is melody to lovers.
A wonder worthy of his rhyme! The grove

"Grew dense with shadows to its inmost covers;
The earth was grey with phantoms; and the air
Was peopled with dim forms, as when there hovers

"A flock of vampire-bats before the glare
Of the tropic sun, bringing, ere evening,
Strange night upon some Indian vale. Thus were

"Phantoms diffused around. And some did fling
Shadows of shadows, yet unlike themselves,
Behind them; some like eaglets on the wing

"Were lost in the white day; others like elves
Danced in a thousand unimagined shapes
Upon the sunny streams and grassy shelves;

"And others sate chattering like restless apes
On vulgar hands.
Some made a cradle of the ermined capes

"Of kingly mantles; some across the tiar
Of pontiffs rode, like demons; others played
Under the crown which girt with empire

"A baby's or an idiot's brow, and made
Their nests in it. The old anatomies
Sate hatching their bare broods under the shade

"Of demon wings; and laughed from their dead eyes
To re-assume the delegated power
Arrayed in which those worms did monarchize

"Who made this earth their charnel. Others, more
Humble, like falcons, sat upon the fist
Of common men, and round their heads did soar;

"Or, like small gnats and flies as thick as mist
On evening marshes, thronged about the brow
Of lawyer, statesman, priest, and theorist;—

"And others, like discoloured flakes of snow,
On fairest bosoms and the sunniest hair
Fell, and were melted by the youthful glow

"Which they extinguished; and, like tears, they were
A veil to those from whose faint lids they rained
In drops of sorrow. I became aware

"Of whence those forms proceeded which thus stained
The track in which we moved. After brief space,
From every form the beauty slowly waned;

"From every firmest limb and fairest face
The strength and freshness fell like dust, and left
The action and the shape without the grace

"Of life. The marble brow of youth was cleft
With care; and, in those eyes where once hope shone,
Desire, like a lioness bereft

"Of her last cub, glared ere it died. Each one
Of that great crowd sent forth incessantly
These shadows, numerous as the dead leaves blown

"In autumn evening from a poplar tree.
Each like himself, and each like other, were
At first. But some distorted seemed to be,—

"Obscure clouds moulded by the casual air;
And of this stuff the car's creative ray
Wrapped all the busy phantoms that were there,

"As the sun shapes the clouds. Thus on the way
Mask after mask fell from the countenance
And form of all. And, long before the day

"Was old, the joy which waked like heaven's glance
The sleepers in the oblivious valley died;
And some grew weary of the ghastly dance,

"And fell, as I have fallen, by the way-side;—
Those soonest from whose forms most shadows passed,
And least of strength and beauty did abide.
"'Then, what is life?' I cried."—

SHELLEY'S NOTE TO PRINCE ATHANASE.

P. 303.

And so his grief remained—let it remain—untold.

The author was pursuing a fuller devolopment of the ideal character of Athanase when it struck him that, in an attempt at extreme refinement and analysis, his conceptions might be betrayed into the assuming a morbid character. The reader will judge whether he is a loser or gainer by this difference.

TRANSLATIONS.

HYMNS OF HOMER.

HYMN TO MERCURY.

I.

SING, Muse, the son of Maia and of Jove,
The Herald-child, King of Arcadia
And all its pastoral hills, whom, in sweet love
Having been interwoven, modest May
Bore Heaven's dread Supreme. An antique grove
Shadowed the cavern where the lovers lay
In the deep night, unseen by Gods or men,
And white-armed Juno slumbered sweetly then.

II.

Now, when the joy of Jove had its fulfilling,
And Heaven's tenth moon chronicled her relief,
She gave to light a babe all babes excelling,
A schemer subtle beyond all belief,
A shepherd of thin dreams, a cow-stealing,
A night-watching, and door-waylaying thief,
Who 'mongst the Gods was soon about to thieve,
And other glorious actions to achieve.

III.

The babe was born at the first peepof day ;
He began playing on the lyre at noon ;
And the same evening did he steal away
Apollo's herds. The fourth day of the moon
On which him bore the venerable May,
From her immortal limbs he leaped full soon,
Nor long could in that sacred cradle keep,
But out to seek Apollo's herds would creep.

IV.

Out of the lofty cavern wandering,
He found a tortoise, and cried out "A treasure!"
(For Mercury first made the tortoise sing).
The beast before the portal at his leisure
The flowery herbage was depasturing,
Moving his feet in a deliberate measure
Over the turf. Jove's profitable son
Eyeing him laughed, and laughing thus begun :—

V.

"A useful godsend are you to me now,
King of the dance, companion of the feast,
Lovely in all your nature! Welcome, you
Excellent plaything! Where, sweet mountain beast,
Got you that speckled shell? Thus much I know,
You must come home with me and be my guest ;
You will give joy to me, and I will do
All that is in my power to honour you.

VI.

"Better to be at home than out of door,
So come with me ; and, though it has been said
That you alive defend from magic power,
I know you will sing sweetly when you're dead."
Thus having spoken, the quaint infant bore,
Lifting it from the grass on which it fed,
And grasping it in his delighted hold,
His treasured prize into the cavern old.

VII.

Then, scooping with a chisel of grey steel,
He bored the life and soul out of the beast.
Nob swifter a swift thought of woe or weal
Darts through the tumult of a human breast

Which thronging cares annoy—not swifter wheel
The flashes of its torture and unrest
Out of the dizzy eyes—than Maia's son
All that he did devise hath featly done.

VIII.

And through the tortoise's hard stony skin
At proper distances small holes he made;
And fastened the cut stems of reeds within;
And with a piece of leather overlaid
The open space; and fixed the cubits in,
Fitting the bridge to both; and stretched o'er all
Symphonious chords of sheep-gut rhythmical.

IX.

When he had wrought the lovely instrument,
He tried the chords, and made division meet,
Preluding with the plectrum; and there went
Up from beneath his hand a tumult sweet
Of mighty sounds, and from his lips he sent
A strain of unpremeditated wit,
Joyous and wild and wanton—such you may
Hear among revellers on a holiday.

X.

He sung how Jove and May of the bright sandal
Dallied in love not quite legitimate;
And his own birth, still scoffing at the scandal,
And naming his own name, did celebrate;
His mother's cave and servant-maids he planned all
In plastic verse, her household stuff and state,
Perennial pot, trippet, and brazen pan:—
But singing he conceived another plan.

XI.

Seized with a sudden fancy for fresh meat,
He in his sacred crib deposited
The hollow lyre, and from the cavern sweet
Rushed with great leaps up to the mountain's head,—
Revolving in his mind some subtle feat
Of thievish craft, such as a swindler might
Devise in the lone season of dun night.

XII.

Lo! the great Sun under the ocean's bed has
Driven steeps and chariots. The child meanwhile strode

O'er the Pierian mountains clothed in shadows,
Where the immortal oxen of the God
Are pastured in the flowering unmown meadows,
And safely stalled in a remote abode.
The archer Argicide, elate and proud,
Drove fifty from the herd, lowing aloud.

XIII.

He drove them wandering o'er the sandy way;
But, being ever mindful of his craft,
Backward and forward drove he them astray,
So that the tracks, which seemed before, were aft.
His sandals then he threw to the ocean spray;
And for each foot he wrought a kind of raft
Of tamarisk, and tamarisk-like sprigs,
And bound them in a lump with withy twigs.

XIV.

And on his feet he tied these sandals light,
The trail of whose wide leaves might not betray
His track; and then, a self-sufficing wight,
Like a man hastening on some distant way,
He from Pieria's mountain bent his flight.
But an old man perceived the infant pass
Down green Onchestus, heaped like beds with grass.

XV.

The old man stood dressing his sunny vine.
"Halloo! old fellow with the crooked shoulder!
You grub those stumps? Before they will bear wine
Methinks even you must grow a little older.
Attend, I pray, to this advice of mine,
As you would 'scape what might appall a bolder—
Seeing, see not; and, hearing, hear not; and,
If you have understanding, understand."

XVI.

So saying, Hermes roused the oxen vast.
O'er shadowy mountain, and resounding dell,
And flower-paven plains, great Hermes passed;
Till the black night divine, which favouring fell
Around his steps, grew grey, and morning fast
Wakened the world to work, and from her cell,
Sea-strewn, the Pallantean Moon sublime
Into her watch-tower just began to climb.

XVII.

Now to Alpheus he had driven all
The broad-foreheaded oxen of the Sun.
They came unwearied to the lofty stall,
And to the water-troughs which ever run
Through the fresh fields; and, when with rushgrass tall,
Lotus, and all sweet herbage, every one
Had pastured been, the great God made them move
Towards the stall in a collected drove.

XVIII.

A mighty pile of wood the God then heaped;
And, having soon conceived the mystery
Of fire, from two smooth laurel-branches stripped
The bark, and rubbed them in his palms. On high
Suddenly forth the burning vapour leapt,
And the divine child saw delightedly.
Mercury first found out for human weal
Tinder-box, matches, fire-irons, flint, and steel.

XIX.

And fine dry logs and roots innumerous
He gathered in a delve upon the ground—
And kindled them—and instantaneous
The strength of the fierce flame was breathed around.
And, whilst the might of glorious Vulcan thus
Wrapped the great pile with glare and roaring sound,
Hermes dragged forth two heifers, lowing loud,
Close to the fire—such might was in the God.

XX.

And on the earth upon their backs he threw
The panting beasts, and rolled them o'er and o'er,
And bored their lives out. Without more ado,
He cut up fat and flesh; and down before
The fire on spits of wood he placed the two,
Toasting their flesh and ribs, and all the gore
Pursed in the bowels; and while this was done
He stretched their hides over a craggy stone.

XXI.

We mortals let an ox grow old, and then
Cut it up after long consideration,—
But joyous-minded Hermes, from the glen,
Drew the fat spoils to the more open station

Of a flat smooth space, and portioned them; and, when
He had by lot assigned to each a ration
Of the twelve Gods, his mind became aware
Of all the joys which in religion are.

XXII.

For the sweet savour of the roasted meat
Tempted him, though immortal. Natheless,
He checked his haughty will, and did not eat,
Though what it cost him words can scarce express,—
And every wish to put such morsels sweet
Down his most sacred throat he did repress;
But soon within the lofty-portalled stall
He placed the fat and flesh and bones and all.

XXIII.

And every trace of the fresh butchery
And cooking the God soon made disappear,
As if it all had vanished through the sky.
He burned the hoofs and horns and head and hair,—
The insatiate fire devoured them hungrily;
And, when he saw that everything was clear,
He quenched the coals, and trampled the black dust,
And in the stream his bloody sandals tossed.

XXIV.

All night he worked in the serene moonshine.
But when the light of day was spread abroad
He sought his natal mountain peaks divine.
On his long wandering, neither man nor god
Had met him since he killed Apollo's kine,
Nor house-dog had barked at him on his road;
Now he obliquely through the key-hole passed,
Like a thin mist or an autumnal blast.

XXV.

Right through the temple of the spacious cave
He went with soft light feet—as if his tread
Fell not on earth; no sound their falling gave.
Then to his cradle he crept quick, and spread
The swaddling-clothes about him; and the knave
Lay playing with the covering of the bed,
With his left hand about his knees—the right
Held his beloved tortoise-lyre tight.

XXVI.

There he lay "innocent as a new-born child,"
As gossips say. But, though he was a God,
The Goddess his fair mother, unbeguiled,
Knew all that he had done, being abroad.
"Whence come you, and from what adventure wild,
You cunning rogue, and where have you abode
All the long night, clothed in your impudence?
What have you done since you departed hence?

XXVII.

"Apollo soon will pass within this gate,
And bind your tender *body in a chain*
Inextricably *tight and fast as fate,*
Unless you can *delude the God again*
Even when within his arms. *Ah runagate!*
A pretty torment *both for gods and men*
Your father made when he made you!"—"Dear mother,"
Replied sly Hermes, "wherefore scold and bother?

XXVIII.

"As if I were like other babes as old,
And understood nothing of what is what,
And cared at all to hear my mother scold!
I in my subtle brain a scheme have got
Which, whilst the sacred stars round heaven are rolled,
Will profit you and me: nor shall our lot
Be as you counsel,—without gifts or food,
To spend our lives in this obscure abode.

XXIX.

"But we will leave this shadow-peopled cave,
And live among the Gods, and pass each day
In high communion, sharing what they have
Of profuse wealth and unexhausted prey;
And from the portion which my father gave
To Phœbus I will snatch my share away;
Which if my father will not—natheless I,
Who am the king of robbers, can but try.

XXX.

"And, if Latona's son should find me out,
I'll countermine him by a deeper plan;
I'll pierce the Pythian temple-walls, though stout,
And sack the fane of everything I can—

Caldrons and tripods of great worth no doubt,
Each golden cup and polished brazen pan,
All the wrought tapestries and garments gay."—
So they together talked.—Meanwhile the Day,

XXXI.

Etherial-born, arose out of the flood
Of flowing ocean, bearing light to men.
Apollo passed toward the sacred wood,
Which from the inmost depths of its green glen
Echoes the voice of Neptune; and there stood,
On the same spot in green Onchestus then,
That same old animal the vine-dresser
Who was employed hedging his vineyard there.

XXXII.

Latona's glorious Son began:—"I pray
Tell, ancient hedger of Onchestus green,
Whether a drove of kine has passed this way,
All heifers with crooked horns? for they have been
Stolen from the herd in high Pieria,
Where a black bull was fed apart, between
Two woody mountains in a neighbouring glen,
And four fierce dogs watched there, unanimous as men.

XXXIII.

"And what is strange, the author of this theft
Has stolen the fatted heifers every one,
But the four dogs and the black bull are left:—
Stolen they were last night at set of sun,
Of their soft beds and their sweet food bereft.
Now tell me, man born ere the world begun,
Have you seen any one pass with the cows?"
To whom the man of overhanging brows:

XXXIV.

"My friend, it would require no common skill
Justly to speak of everything I see;
On various purposes of good or ill
Many pass by my vineyard,—and to me
'Tis difficult to know the invisible
Thoughts which in all those many minds may be.
Thus much alone I certainly can say:—
I tilled these vines till the decline of day,

XXXV.

"And then I thought I saw, but dare not speak
With certainty of such a wondrous thing,
A child who could not have been born a week
Those fair-horned cattle closely following,
And in his hand he held a polished stick:
And, as on purpose, he walked wavering
From one side to the other of the road,
And with his face opposed the steps he trod."

XXXVI.

Apollo, hearing this, passed quickly on—
No wingèd omen could have shown more clear
That the deceiver was his Father's Son.
So the God wraps a purple atmosphere
Around his shoulders, and like fire is gone
To famous Pylos, seeking his kine there;
And found their track and his, yet hardly cold;
And cried: "What wonder do mine eyes behold!

XXXVII.

"Here are the footsteps of the hornèd herd
Turned back towards their fields of asphodel;—
But *these* are not the tracks of beast or bird,
Grey wolf, or bear, or lion of the dell,
Or manèd Centaur—sand was never stirred
By man or woman thus! Inexplicable!
Who with unwearied feet could e'er impress
The sand with such enormous vestiges?

XXXVIII.

"That was most strange—but this is stranger still!"
Thus having said, Phœbus impetuously
Sought high Cyllene's forest-cinctured hill,
And the deep cavern where dark shadows lie,
And where the ambrosial Nymph with happy will
Bore the Saturnian's love-child Mercury—
And a delighted odour from the dew
Of the hill pastures, at his coming, flew.

XXXIX.

And Phœbus stooped under the craggy roof
Arched over the dark cavern. Maia's child
Perceived that he came angry, far aloof,
About the cows of which he had been beguiled;

And over him the fine and fragrant woof
Of his ambrosial swaddling-clothes he piled—
As among firebrands lies a burning spark
Covered, beneath the ashes cold and dark.

XL.

There, like an infant who had sucked his fill
And now was newly washed and put to bed,—
Awake, but courting sleep with weary will,
And gathered in a lump, hands, feet, and head,—
He lay; and his belovèd tortoise still
He grasped, and held under his shoulder-blade.
Phœbus the lovely Mountain Goddess knew;
Not less her subtle, swindling baby, who

XLI.

Lay swathed in his sly wiles. Round every crook
Of the ample cavern, for his kine Apollo
Looked sharp; and, when he saw them not, he took
The glittering key, and opened three great hollow
Recesses in the rock—where many a nook
Was filled with the sweet food immortals swallow,
And mighty heaps of silver and of gold
Were piled within—a wonder to behold—

XLII.

And white and silver robes, all overwrought
With cunning workmanship of tracery sweet:
Except among the Gods there can be nought
In the wide world to be compared with it.
Latona's offspring, after having sought
His herds in every corner, thus did greet
Great Hermes:—"Little cradled rogue, declare,
Of my illustrious heifers, where they are!

XLIII.

"Speak quickly! or a quarrel between us
Must rise, and the event will be that I
Shall haul you into dismal Tartarus,
In fiery gloom to dwell eternally:
Nor shall your father nor your mother loose
The bars of that black dungeon: utterly
You shall be cast out from the light of day,
To rule the ghosts of men, unblessed as they."

XLIV.

To whom thus Hermes slily answered:—"Son
Of great Latona, what a speech is this!
Why come you here to ask me what is done
With the wild oxen which it seems you miss?
I have not seen them, nor from any one
Have heard a word of the whole business;
If you should promise an immense reward,
I could not tell more than you now have heard.

XLV.

"An ox-stealer should be both tall and strong,
And I am but a little new-born thing,
Who yet, at least, can think of nothing wrong.
My business is to suck, and sleep, and fling
The cradle-clothes about me all day long,
Or, half asleep, hear my sweet mother sing,
And to be washed in water clean and warm,
And hushed and kissed and kept secure from harm.

XLVI.

"Oh let not e'er this quarrel be averred!
The astounded Gods would laugh at you if e'er
You should allege a story so absurd
As that a new-born infant forth could fare
Out of his home after a savage herd.
I was born yesterday—my small feet are
Too tender for the roads so hard and rough:—
And, if you think that this is not enough,

XLVII.

"I swear a great oath, by my Father's head,
That I stole not your cows, and that I know
Of no one else who might, or could, or did.—
What ever things cows are I do not know,
For I have only heard the name."—This said,
He winked as fast as could be, and his brow
Was wrinkled, and a whistle loud gave lie,
Like one who hears some strange absurdity.

XLVIII.

Apollo gently smiled and said:—"Ay, ay,—
You cunning little rascal, you will bore
Many a rich man's house, and your array
Of thieves will lay their siege before his door,

Silent as night, in night; and many a day
In the wild glens rough shepherds will deplore
That you or yours, having an appetite,
Met with their cattle, comrade of the night.

XLIX.

"And this among the Gods shall be your gift,—
To be considered as the lord of those
Who swindle, house-break, sheep-steal, and shop-lift.
But now, if you would not your last sleep doze,
Crawl out!"—Thus saying, Phœbus did uplift
The subtle infant in his swaddling-clothes;
And in his arms, according to his wont,
A scheme devised the illustrious Argiphont.

L.

. . . . . .
And sneezed and shuddered. Phœbus on the grass
Him threw; and, whilst all that he had designed
He did perform,—eager although to pass,
Apollo darted from his mighty mind
Towards the subtle babe the following scoff:
"Do not imagine this will get you off,

LI.

"You little swaddled child of Jove and May!"
And seized him:—"By this omen I shall trace
My noble herds, and you shall lead the way."—
Cyllenian Hermes from the grassy place,
Like one in earnest haste to get away,
Rose, and, with hands lifted towards his face,
Round both his ears up from his shoulders drew
His swaddling clothes, and—"What mean you to do

LII.

"With me, you unkind God?" said Mercury:
"Is it about these cows you teaze me so?
I wish the race of cows were perished!—I
Stole not your cows—I do not even know
What things cows are. Alas! I well may sigh
That, since I came into this world of woe,
I should have ever heard the name of one—
But I appeal to the Saturnian's throne."

LIII.

Thus Phœbus and the vagrant Mercury
Talked without coming to an explanation,
With adverse purpose. As for Phœbus, he
Sought not revenge, but only information;
And Hermes tried with lies and roguery
To cheat Apollo.—But when no evasion
Served—for the cunning one his match had found—
He paced on first over the sandy ground.

LIV.

He of the Silver Bow, the child of Jove,
Followed behind, till to their heavenly Sire
Came both his children, beautiful as Love,
And from his equal balance did require
A judgment in the cause wherein they strove.
O'er odorous Olympus and its snows
A murmuring tumult as they came arose,—

LV.

And from the folded depths of the great Hill,
While Hermes and Apollo reverent stood
Before Jove's throne, the indestructible
Immortals rushed in mighty multitude;
And, whilst their seats in order due they fill,
The lofty Thunderer in a careless mood
To Phœbus said:—"Whence drive you this sweet prey,
This Herald-baby, born but yesterday?—

LVI.

"A most important subject, trifler, this
To lay before the Gods!"—"Nay, father, nay,
When you have understood the business,
Say not that I alone am fond of prey.
I found this little boy in a recess
Under Cyllene's mountains far away—
A manifest and most apparent thief,
A scandal-monger beyond all belief.

LVII.

"I never saw his like either in heaven
Or upon earth for knavery or craft.
Out of the field my cattle yester-even,
By the low shore on which the loud sea laughed,

He right down to the river-ford had driven;
And mere astonishment would make you daft
To see the double kind of footsteps strange
He has impressed wherever he did range.

LVIII.

"The cattle's track on the black dust full well
Is evident, as if they went towards
The place from which they came—that asphodel
Meadow in which I feed my many herds;
His steps were most incomprehensible.
I know not how I can describe in words
Those tracks: he could have gone along the sands
Neither upon his feet nor on his hands;

LIX.

"He must have had some other stranger mode
Of moving on. Those vestiges immense,
Far as I traced them on the sandy road,
Seemed like the trail of oak-toppings: but thence
No mark nor track denoting where they trod
The hard ground gave. But, working at his fence,
A mortal hedger saw him as he passed
To Pylos, with the cows, in fiery haste.

LX.

"I found that in the dark he quietly
Had sacrificed some cows, and before light
Had thrown the ashes all dispersedly
About the road—then, still as gloomy night,
Had crept into his cradle, either eye
Rubbing, and cogitating some new sleight.
No eagle could have seen him as he lay
Hid in his cavern from the peering day.

LXI.

"I taxed him with the fact, when he averred
Most solemnly that he did neither see
Nor even had in any manner heard
Of my lost cows, what ever things cows be;
Nor could he tell, though offered a reward,
Not even who could tell of them to me."
So speaking, Phœbus sate. And Hermes then
Addressed the Supreme Lord of Gods and Men:

LXII.

"Great Father, you know clearly beforehand
That all which I shall say to you is sooth;
I am a most veracious person, and
Totally unacquainted with untruth.
At sunrise Phœbus came, but with no band
Of Gods to bear him witness, in great wrath
To my abode, seeking his heifers there,
And saying that I must show him where they are,

LXIII.

"Or he would hurl me down the dark abyss.
I know that every Apollonian limb
Is clothed with speed and might and manliness
As a green bank with flowers—but, unlike him,
I was born yesterday, and you may guess
He well knew this when he indulged the whim
Of bullying a poor little new-born thing
That slept and never thought of cow-driving.

LXIV.

"Am I like a strong fellow who steals kine?
Believe me, dearest Father—such you are—
This driving of the herds is none of mine;
Across my threshold did I wander ne'er,
So may I thrive! I reverence the divine
Sun and the Gods, and I love you, and care
Even for this hard accuser—who must know
I am as innocent as they or you.

LXV.

"I swear by these most gloriously-wrought portals
(It is, you will allow, an oath of might)—
Through which the multitude of the Immortals
Pass and repass for ever, day and night,
Devising schemes for the affairs of mortals—
That I am guiltless; and I will requite,
Although mine enemy be great and strong,
His cruel threat:—do thou defend the young!"

LXVI.

So speaking, the Cyllenian Argiphont
Winked, as if now his adversary was fitted:—
And Jupiter, according to his wont,
Laughed heartily to hear the subtle-witted

Infant give such a plausible account,
And every word a lie. But he remitted
Judgment at present—and his exhortation
Was to compose the affair by arbitration.

LXVII.

And they by mighty Jupiter were bidden
To go forth with a single purpose both,
Neither the other chiding nor yet chidden:
And Mercury with innocence and truth
To lead the way, and show where he had hidden
The mighty heifers.—Hermes, nothing loth,
Obeyed the Ægis-bearer's will—for he
Is able to persuade all easily.

LXVIII.

These lovely children of Heaven's highest Lord
Hastened to Pylos and the pastures wide
And lofty stalls by the Alphean ford,
Where wealth in the mute night is multiplied
With silent growth. Whilst Hermes drove the herd
Out of the stony cavern, Phœbus spied
The hides of those the little babe had slain,
Stretched on the precipice above the plain.

LXIX.

"How was it possible," then Phœbus said,
"That you, a little child born yesterday,
A thing on mother's milk and kisses fed,
Could two prodigious heifers ever flay?
E'en I myself may well hereafter dread
Your prowess, offspring of Cyllenian May,
When you grow strong and tall."—He spoke, and bound
Stiff withy bands the infant's wrists around.

LXX.

He might as well have bound the oxen wild:
The withy bands, though starkly interknit,
Fell at the feet of the immortal child,
Loosened by some device of his quick wit.
Phœbus perceived himself again beguiled.
And stared—while Hermes sought some hole or pit,
Looking askance and winking fast as thought,
Where he might hide himself and not be caught.

LXXI.

Sudden he changed his plan, and with strange skill
Subdued the strong Latonian, by the might
Of winning music, to his mightier will.
His left hand held the lyre, and in his right
The plectrum struck the chords: unconquerable
Up from beneath his hand in circling flight
The gathering music rose—and sweet as Love
The penetrating notes did live and move

LXXII.

Within the heart of great Apollo. He
Listened with all his soul, and laughed for pleasure.
Close to his side stood harping fearlessly
The unabashèd boy, and to the measure
Of the sweet lyre there followed loud and free
His joyous voice; for he unlocked the treasure
Of his deep song, illustrating the birth
Of the bright Gods and the dark desert Earth;

LXXIII.

And how to the Immortals every one
A portion was assigned of all that is.
But chief Mnemosyne did Maia's son
Clothe in the light of his loud melodies.
And, as each God was born or had begun,
He in their order due and fit degrees
Sung of his birth and being—and did move
Apollo to unutterable love.

LXXIV.

These words were wingèd with his swift delight:
"You heifer-stealing schemer, well do you
Deserve that fifty oxen should requite
Such minstrelsies as I have heard even now.
Comrade of feasts, little contriving wight,
One of your secrets I would gladly know,—
Whether the glorious power you now show forth
Was folded up within you at your birth,

LXXV.

"Or whether mortal taught or God inspired
The power of unpremeditated song?
Many divinest sounds have I admired
The Olympian Gods and mortal men among;

But such a strain of wondrous, strange, untired,
And soul-awakening music, sweet and strong,
Yet did I never hear except from thee,
Offspring of May, impostor Mercury!

LXXVI.

"What Muse, what skill, what unimagined use,
What exercise of subtlest art, has given
Thy songs such power?—for those who hear may choose
From three the choicest of the gifts of Heaven,
Delight, and love, and sleep, sweet sleep whose dews
Are sweeter than the balmy tears of even.
And I, who speak this praise, am that Apollo
Whom the Olympian Muses ever follow:

LXXVII.

"And their delight is dance, and the blithe noise
Of song and overflowing poesy,
And, sweet even as desire, the liquid voice
Of pipes that fills the clear air thrillingly.
But never did my inmost soul rejoice
In this dear work of youthful revelry
As now I wonder at thee, Son of Jove;
Thy harpings and thy song are soft as love.

LXXVIII.

"Now, since thou hast, although so very small,
Science of arts so glorious, thus I swear,—
And let this cornel javelin, keen and tall,
Witness between us what I promise here,—
That I will lead thee to the Olympian Hall,
Honoured and mighty, with thy mother dear,
And many glorious gifts in joy will give thee,
And even at the end will ne'er deceive thee."

LXXIX.

To whom thus Mercury with prudent speech:—
"Wisely hast thou enquired of my skill.
I envy thee no thing I know to teach
Even this day—for both in word and will
I would be gentle with thee. Thou canst reach
All things in thy wise spirit, and thy sill
Is highest in heaven among the sons of Jove,
Who loves thee in the fullness of his love.

LXXX.

"The Counsellor Supreme has given to thee
Divinest gifts out of the amplitude
Of his profuse exhaustless treasury.
By thee, 'tis said, the depths are understood
Of his far voice; by thee the mystery
Of all oracular fates and the dread mood
Of the diviner is breathed up: even I—
A child—perceive thy might and majesty.

LXXXI.

"Thou canst seek out and compass all that wit
Can find or teach. Yet, since thou wilt, come, take
The lyre—be mine the glory giving it—
Strike the sweet chords, and sing aloud, and wake
Thy joyous pleasure out of many a fit
Of trancèd sound—and with fleet fingers make
Thy liquid-voicèd comrade talk with thee,—
It can talk measured music eloquently.

LXXXII.

"Then bear it boldly to the revel loud,
Love-wakening dance, or feast of solemn state,
A joy by night or day: for those endowed
With art and wisdom who interrogate
It teaches, babbling in delightful mood
All things which make the spirit most elate,
Soothing the mind with sweet familiar play,
Chasing the heavy shadows of dismay.

LXXXIII.

"To those who are unskilled in its sweet tongue,
Though they should question most impetuously
Its hidden soul, it gossips something wrong—
Some senseless and impertinent reply.
But thou, who art as wise as thou art strong,
Canst compass all that thou desirest. I
Present thee with this music-flowing shell,
Knowing thou canst interrogate it well.

LXXXIV.

"And let us two henceforth together feed,
On this green mountain slope and pastoral plain,
The herds in litigation. They will breed
Quickly enough to recompense our pain,

If to the bulls and cows we take good heed;—
And thou, though somewhat over-fond of gain,
Grudge me not half the profit."—Having spoke,
The shell he proffered, and Apollo took;

LXXXV.

And gave him in return the glittering lash,
Installing him as herdsman. From the look
Of Mercury then laughed a joyous flash.
And then Apollo with the plectrum strook
The chords, and from beneath his hands a crash
Of mighty sounds rushed up, whose music shook
The soul with sweetness, and like an adept
His sweeter voice a just accordance kept.

LXXXVI.

The herd went wandering o'er the divine mead,
Whilst these most beautiful Sons of Jupiter
Won their swift way up to the snowy head
Of white Olympus, with the joyous lyre
Soothing their journey; and their Father dread
Gathered them both into familiar
Affection sweet,—and then, and now, and ever,
Hermes must love Him of the Golden Quiver,

LXXXVII.

To whom he gave the lyre that sweetly sounded,
Which skilfully he held, and played thereon.
He piped the while, and far and wide rebounded
The echo of his pipings,—every one
Of the Olympians sat with joy astounded:
While he conceived another piece of fun,
One of his old tricks—which the God of Day
Perceiving said:—"I fear thee, Son of May;—

LXXXVIII.

"I fear thee and thy sly chameleon spirit,
Lest thou shouldst steal my lyre and crooked bow.
This glory and power thou dost from Jove inherit,
To teach all craft upon the earth below;
Thieves love and worship thee—it is thy merit
To make all mortal business ebb and flow
By roguery.—Now, Hermes, if you dare
By sacred Styx a mighty oath to swear,

LXXXIX.

"That you will never rob me, you will do
A thing extremely pleasing to my heart."
Then Mercury sware by the Stygian dew
That he would never steal his bow or dart,
Or lay his hands on what to him was due,
Or ever would employ his powerful art
Against his Pythian fane. Then Phœbus swore
There was no God or man whom he loved more.

XC.

"And I will give thee as a good-will token
The beautiful wand of wealth and happiness;
A perfect three-leaved rod of gold unbroken,
Whose magic will thy footsteps ever bless;
And whatsoever by Jove's voice is spoken
Of earthly or divine from its recess
It like a living soul to thee will speak,—
And more than this do thou forbear to seek:

XCI.

"For, dearest child, the divinations high
Which thou requirest 'tis unlawful ever
That thou or any other deity
Should understand—and vain were the endeavour;
For they are hidden in Jove's mind, and I,
In trust of them, have sworn that I would never
Betray the counsels of Jove's inmost will
To any God—the oath was terrible.

XCII.

"Then, golden-wanded brother, ask me not
To speak the fates by Jupiter designed;
But be it mine to tell their various lot
To the unnumbered tribes of humankind.
Let good to these and ill to those be wrought
As I dispense. But he who comes consigned
By voice and wings of perfect augury
To my great shrine shall find avail in me:

XCIII.

"Him will I not deceive, but will assist.
But he who comes relying on such birds
As chatter vainly, who would strain and twist
The purpose of the Gods with idle words,

And deems their knowledge light, he shall have missed
His road—whilst I among my other hoards
His gifts deposit. Yet, O Son of May,
I have another wondrous thing to say:—

XCIV.

"There are three Fates, three virgin Sisters, who,
Rejoicing in their wind-outspeeding wings,
Their heads with flour snowed over white and new,
Sit in a vale round which Parnassus flings
Its circling skirts—from these I have learned true
Vaticinations of remotest things.
My father cared not. Whilst they search out dooms,
They sit apart and feed on honeycombs.

XCV.

"They, having eaten the fresh honey, grow
Drunk with divine enthusiasm, and utter
With earnest willingness the truth they know;
But, if deprived of that sweet food, they mutter
All plausible delusions. These to you
I give;—if you enquire, they will not stutter.
Delight your own soul with them:—any man
You would instruct may profit if he can.

XCVI.

"Take these and the fierce oxen, Maia's child.
O'er many a horse and toil-enduring mule,
O'er jagged-jawèd lions, and the wild
White-tuskèd boars, o'er all, by field or pool,
Of cattle which the mighty Mother mild
Nourishes in her bosom, thou shalt rule.
Thou dost alone the veil of death uplift:
Thou givest not—yet this is a great gift."

XCVII.

Thus King Apollo loved the child of May
In truth, and Jove covered them with love and joy.
Hermes with Gods and men even from that day
Mingled, and wrought the latter much annoy
And little profit, going far astray
Through the dun night.—Farewell, delightful Boy,
Of Jove and Maia sprung!—never by me,
Nor thou nor other songs shall unremembered be.

July 1820.

TO VENUS.

[V. 1-55, with some omissions.]

MUSE, sing the deeds of golden Aphrodite,
Who wakens with her smile the lulled delight
Of sweet desire, taming the eternal kings
Of heaven, and men, and all the living things
That fleet along the air, or whom the sea,
And earth with her maternal ministry,
Nourish innumerable! Thy delight
All seek, . . . O crowned Aphrodite.

Three spirits canst thou not deceive or quell:—
Minerva, child of Jove, who loves too well
Fierce war and mingling combat, and the fame
Of glorious deeds, to heed thy gentle flame;—
Diana, . . . golden-shafted queen,
Is tamed not by thy smiles; the shadows green
Of the wild woods, the bow, the . . .
And piercing cries amid the swift pursuit
Of beasts among waste mountains, such delight
Is hers, and men who know and do the right;—
Nor Saturn's first-born daughter, Vesta chaste,
Whom Neptune and Apollo wooed the last
(Such was the will of ægis-bearing Jove),
But sternly she refused the ills of love,
And by her mighty Father's head she swore,
An oath not unperformed, that evermore
A virgin she would live 'mid Deities
Divine. Her Father, for such gentle ties
Renounced, gave glorious gifts; thus in his hall
She sits, and feeds luxuriously. O'er all
In every fane, her honours first arise
From men—the eldest of Divinities.

These Spirits she persuades not nor deceives;
But none beside escape, so well she weaves
Her unseen toils: nor mortal men, nor Gods
Who live secure in their unseen abodes.
She won the soul of him whose fierce delight
Is thunder—first in glory and in might;
And—as she willed, his mighty mind deceiving,
With mortal limbs his deathless limbs inweaving,—

Concealed him from his spouse and sister fair,
Whom to wise Saturn ancient Rhea bare.

. . . But in return
In Venus Jove did soft desire awaken;
That, by her own enchantments overtaken,
She might, no more from human union free,
Burn for a nursling of mortality.
For once, amid the assembled Deities,
The laughter-loving Venus from her eyes
Shot forth the light of a soft starlight smile,
And boasting said that she, secure the while,
Could bring at will to the assembled Gods
The mortal tenants of earth's dark abodes,
And mortal offspring from a deathless stem
She could produce in scorn and spite of them.
Therefore he poured desire into her breast
Of young Anchises, . . .
Feeding his herds among the mossy fountains
Of the wide Ida's many-folded mountains;
Whom Venus saw, and loved, and the love clung
Like wasting fire her senses wild among.

1818.

TO CASTOR AND POLLUX.

YE wild-eyed Muses, sing the Twins of Jove,
Whom the fair-ankled Leda, mixed in love
With mighty Saturn's heaven-obscuring Child,
On Taygetus, that lofty mountain wild,
Brought forth in joy; mild Pollux void of blame,
And steed-subduing Castor, heirs of fame.
These are the Powers who earth-born mortals save,
And ships whose flight is swift along the wave.
When wintry tempests o'er the savage sea
Are raging, and the sailors tremblingly
Call on the twins of Jove with prayer and vow,
Gathered in fear upon the lofty prow,
And sacrifice with snow-white lambs,—the wind,
And the huge billow bursting close behind,

Even then beneath the weltering waters bear
The staggering ship—they suddenly appear,
On yellow wings rushing athwart the sky;
And lull the blasts in mute tranquillity;
And strew the waves on the white ocean's bed,
Fair omen of the voyage. From toil and dread
The sailors rest, rejoicing in the sight,
And plough the quiet sea in safe delight.

TO MINERVA.

I SING the glorious Power with azure eyes,
Athenian Pallas, tameless, chaste, and wise,
Tritogenia, town-preserving maid,
Revered and mighty; from his awful head
Whom Jove brought forth, in warlike armour dressed,
Golden, all radiant. Wonder strange possessed
The everlasting Gods that shape to see,
Shaking a javelin keen, impetuously
Rush from the crest of ægis-bearing Jove.
Fearfully heaven was shaken, and did move
Beneath the might of the cerulean-eyed;
Earth dreadfully resounded, far and wide:
And, lifted from his depths, the sea swelled high
In purple billows; the tide suddenly
Stood still; and great Hyperion's Son long time
Checked his swift steeds: till, where she stood sublime,
Pallas from her immortal shoulders threw
The arms divine. Wise Jove rejoiced to view.
Child of the Ægis-bearer, hail to thee!
Nor thine nor others praise shall unremembered be.

TO THE SUN.

OFFSPRING of Jove, Calliope, once more
To the bright Sun thy hymn of music pour,
Whom to the Child of star-clad Heaven and Earth
Euryphaessa, large-eyed Nymph, brought forth,—
Euryphaessa, the famed sister fair

Of great Hyperion, who to him did bear
A race of loveliest children; the young Morn,
Whose arms are like twin roses newly born,
The fair-haired Moon, and the immortal Sun,
Who, borne by heavenly steeds, his race doth run
Unconquerably, illuming the abodes
Of mortal men and the eternal Gods.
Fiercely look forth his awe-inspiring eyes
Beneath his golden helmet, whence arise
And are shot forth afar clear beams of light.
His countenance, with radiant glory bright,
Beneath his graceful locks far shines around;
And the light vest with which his limbs are bound,
Of woof etherial delicately twined,
Glows in the stream of the uplifting wind.
His rapid steeds soon bear him to the west,
Where their steep flight his hands divine arrest,
And the fleet car with yoke of gold, which he
Sends from bright heaven beneath the shadowy sea.

TO THE MOON.

DAUGHTERS of Jove, whose voice is melody,
Muses, who know and rule all minstrelsy!
Sing the wide-winged Moon. Around the earth,
From her immortal head in heaven shot forth,
Far light is scattered—boundless glory springs;
Where'er she spreads her many-beaming wings,
The lampless air glows round her golden crown.
But, when the Moon divine from heaven is gone
Under the sea, her beams within abide;
Till, bathing her bright limbs in ocean's tide,
Clothing her form in garments glittering far,
And having yoked to her immortal car
The beam-invested steeds whose necks on high
Curve back, she drives to a remoter sky
A western crescent, borne impetuously.
Then is made full the circle of her light;
And, as she grows, her beams more bright and bright
Are poured from heaven where she is hovering then,
A wonder and a sign to mortal men.

The Son of Saturn with this glorious Power
Mingled in love and sleep—to whom she bore
Pandeia, a bright maid of beauty rare
Among the Gods whose lives eternal are.

Hail, Queen, great Moon, white-armed Divinity,
Fair-haired and favourable! Thus with thee
My song beginning, by its music sweet,
Shall make immortal many a glorious feat
Of Demigods,—with lovely lips, so well
Which minstrels, servants of the Muses, tell.

TO THE EARTH, MOTHER OF ALL.

O UNIVERSAL Mother, who dost keep
From everlasting thy foundations deep,
Eldest of things, great Earth, I sing of thee!
All shapes that have their dwelling in the sea,
All things that fly, or on the ground divine
Live, move, and there are nourished—these are thine;
These from thy wealth thou dost sustain; from thee
Fair babes are born, and fruits on every tree
Hang ripe and large, revered Divinity!
The life of mortal men beneath thy sway
Is held; thy power both gives and takes away.
Happy are they whom thy mild favours nourish;
All things unstinted round them grow and flourish.
For them endures the life-sustaining field
Its load of harvest, and their cattle yield
Large increase, and their house with wealth is filled.
Such honoured dwell in cities fair and free,
The homes of lovely women, prosperously.
Their sons exult in youth's new-budding gladness;
And their fresh daughters, free from care or sadness,
With bloom-inwoven dance and happy song,
On the soft flowers the meadow-grass among,
Leap round them sporting. Such delights by thee
Are given, rich Power, revered Divinity.—

Mother of Gods, thou wife of starry Heaven,
Farewell! Be thou propitious, and be given
A happy life for this brief melody!
Nor thou nor other songs shall unremembered be.

THE CYCLOPS.

A SATYRIC DRAMA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF EURIPIDES.

SILENUS.	ULYSSES.
CHORUS OF SATYRS.	THE CYCLOPS.

Silenus. O BACCHUS, what a world of toil, both now
And ere these limbs were overworn with age,
Have I endured for thee! First, when thou fledst
The mountain nymphs who nursed thee, driven afar
By the strange madness Juno sent upon thee;
Then in the battle of the Sons of Earth,
When I stood foot by foot close to thy side,
No unpropitious fellow combatant,
And, driving through his shield my wingèd spear,
Slew vast Enceladus. Consider now,
Is it a dream of which I speak to thee?
By Jove it is not, for you have the trophies!
And now I suffer more than all before.
For, when I heard that Juno had devised
A tedious voyage for you, I put to sea
With all my children quaint in search of you,
And I myself stood on the beakèd prow,
And fixed the naked mast; and all my boys,
Leaning upon their oars, with splash and strain
Made white with foam the green and purple sea,—
And so we sought you, king. We were sailing
Near Malea, when an eastern wind arose,
And drove us to this wild Ætnean rock.
The one-eyed children of the Ocean God,
The man-destroying Cyclopses, inhabit,
On this wild shore, their solitary caves;
And one of these, named Polypheme, has caught us
To be his slaves; and so, for all delight
Of Bacchic sports, sweet dance and melody,
We keep this lawless giant's wandering flocks.
My sons indeed, on far declivities,
Young things themselves, tend on the youngling sheep;
But I remain to fill the water casks,
Or sweeping the hard floor, or ministering
Some impious and abominable meal
To the fell Cyclops. I am wearied of it!

And now I must scrape up the littered floor
With this great iron rake, so to receive
My absent master and his evening sheep
In a cave neat and clean. Even now I see
My children tending the flocks hitherward.
Ha! what is this? are your Sicinnian measures
Even now the same as when with dance and song
You brought young Bacchus to Athæa's halls?

CHORUS OF SATYRS.

STROPHE.

Where has he of race divine
Wandered in the winding rocks?
Here the air is calm and fine
For the father of the flocks;
Here the grass is soft and sweet,
And the river eddies meet
In the trough beside the cave,
Bright as in their fountain wave.—
Neither here, nor on the dew
Of the lawny uplands feeding? . . .
Oh! you come!—a stone at you
Will I throw to mend your breeding;—
Get along, you hornèd thing,
Wild, seditious, rambling!

. . . .

EPODE.

An Iacchic melody
To the golden Aphrodite
Will I lift, as erst did I
Seeking her and her delight
With the Mænads, whose white feet
To the music glance and fleet.
Bacchus, O belovèd, where,
Shaking wide thy yellow hair,
Wanderest thou alone, afar?
To the one-eyed Cyclops we,
Who by right thy servants are,
Minister in misery,
In these wretched goatskins clad,
Far from thy delights and thee.

Silenus. Be silent, sons! command the slaves to drive
The gathered flocks into the rock-roofed cave.

Chorus. Go!—But what needs this serious haste, O father?
Silenus. I see a Grecian vessel on the coast;
And thence the rowers, with some general,
Approaching to this cave. About their necks
Hang empty vessels, as they wanted food,
And water flasks.—Oh miserable strangers!
Whence come they, that they know not what and who
My master is, approaching in ill hour
The inhospitable roof of Polypheme,
And the Cyclopian jaw-bone, man-destroying?
Be silent, Satyrs, while I ask and hear
Whence coming they arrive the Ætnean hill.
Ulysses. Friends, can you show me some clear water spring,
The remedy of our thirst? Will any one
Furnish with food seamen in want of it? . . .
Ha! what is this? We seem to be arrived
At the blithe court of Bacchus! I observe
This sportive band of Satyrs near the caves.
First let me greet the elder.—Hail!
Silenus. Hail thou,
O stranger! Tell thy country and thy race.
Ulysses. The Ithacan Ulysses, and the king
Of Cephalonia.
Silenus. Oh! I know the man,—
Wordy and shrewd, the son of Sisyphus.
Ulysses. I am the same; but do not rail upon me.
Silenus. Whence sailing do you come to Sicily?
Ulysses. From Ilion, and from the Trojan toils.
Silenus. How touched you not at your paternal shore?
Ulysses. The strength of tempests bore me here by force.
Silenus. The selfsame accident occurred to me.
Ulysses. Were you then driven here by stress of weather?
Silenus. Following the pirates who had kidnapped Bacchus.
Ulysses. What land is this, and who inhabit it?
Silenus. Ætna, the loftiest peak in Sicily.
Ulysses. And are there walls, and tower-surrounded towns?
Silenus. There are not. These lone rocks are bare of men.
Ulysses. And who possess the land? the race of beasts?
Silenus. Cyclopes, who live in caverns, not in houses.
Ulysses. Obeying whom? or is the state popular?
Silenus. Shepherds: no one obeys any thing aught.
Ulysses. How live they? do they sow the corn of Ceres?

Silenus. On milk and cheese, and on the flesh of sheep.
Ulysses. Have they the Bromian drink from the vine's stream?
Silenus. Ah! no; they live in an ungracious land.
Ulysses. And are they just to strangers?—hospitable?
Silenus. They think the sweetest thing a stranger brings
Is his own flesh.
Ulysses. What! do they eat man's flesh?
Silenus. No one comes here who is not eaten up.
Ulysses. The Cyclops now—where is he? Not at home?
Silenus. Absent on Ætna, hunting with his dogs.
Ulysses. Know'st thou what thou must do to aid us hence?
Silenus. I know not: we will help you all we can.
Ulysses. Provide us food, of which we are in want.
Silenus. Here is not anything, as I said, but meat.
Ulysses. But meat is a sweet remedy for hunger.
Silenus. Cow's milk there is, and store of curdled cheese.
Ulysses. Bring out: I would see all before I bargain.
Silenus. But how much gold will you engage to give?
Ulysses. I bring no gold, but Bacchic juice.
Silenus. Oh joy!
'Tis long since these dry lips were wet with wine.
Ulysses. Maron, the son of the God, gave it me.
Silenus. Whom I have nursed a baby in my arms.
Ulysses. The son of Bacchus, for your clearer knowledge.
Silenus. Have you it now?—or is it in the ship?
Ulysses. Old man, this skin contains it, which you see.
Silenus. Why! this would hardly be a mouthful for me!
Ulysses. Nay, twice as much as you can draw from thence.
Silenus. You speak of a fair fountain, sweet to me.
Ulysses. Would you first taste of the unmingled wine?
Silenus. 'Tis just—tasting invites the purchaser.
Ulysses. Here is the cup, together with the skin.
Silenus. Pour: that the draught may fillip my remembrance.
Ulysses. See!
Silenus. Papaiapæx! what a sweet smell it has!
Ulysses. You see it then?
Silenus. By Jove, no! but I smell it.
Ulysses. Taste, that you may not praise it in words only.
Silenus. Babai! Great Bacchus calls me forth to dance!
Joy! joy!
Ulysses. Did it flow sweetly down your throat?
Silenus. So that it tingled to my very nails.

Ulysses. And in addition I will give you gold.
Silenus. Let gold alone. Only unlock the cask.
Ulysses. Bring out some cheeses now, or a young goat.
Silenus. That will I do, despising any master.
Yes, let me drink one cup, and I will give
All that the Cyclopes feed upon their mountains.
. . . . . .
Chorus. Ye have taken Troy, and laid your hands on Helen?
Ulysses. And utterly destroyed the race of Priam.
Silenus. . . . . . .
The wanton wretch! She was bewitched to see
The many-coloured anklets and the chain
Of woven gold which girt the neck of Paris,
And so she left that good man Menelaus.
There should be no more women in the world
But such as are reserved for me alone.—
See, here are sheep, and here are goats, Ulysses;
Here are unsparing cheeses of pressed milk.
Take them; depart with what good speed ye may;
First leaving my reward, the Bacchic dew
Of joy-inspiring grapes.
Ulysses. Ah me! Alas!
What shall we do? the Cyclops is at hand!
Old man, we perish! whither can we fly?
Silenus. Hide yourselves quick within that hollow rock.
Ulysses. 'Twere perilous to fly into the net.
Silenus. The cavern has recesses numberless;
Hide yourselves quick!
Ulysses. That will I never do:
The mighty Troy would be indeed disgraced
If I should fly one man. How many times
Have I withstood with shield immovable
Ten thousand Phrygians!—If I needs must die,
Yet will I die with glory;—if I live,
The praise which I have gained will yet remain.
Silenus. What ho! assistance, comrades! haste, assistance!

The CYCLOPS, SILENUS, ULYSSES; CHORUS.

Cyclops. What is this tumult? Bacchus is not here,
Nor tympanies nor brazen castanets.
How are my young lambs in the cavern? milking
Their dams, or playing by their sides? And is

The new cheese pressed into the bulrush baskets?
Speak! I'll beat some of you till you rain tears!
Look up, not downwards, when I speak to you!
Silenus. See: I now gape at Jupiter himself,
I stare upon Orion and the stars.
Cyclops. Well, is the dinner fitly cooked and laid?
Silenus. All ready, if your throat is ready too.
Cyclops. Are the bowls full of milk besides?
Silenus. O'erbrimming;
So you may drink a tunful if you will.
Cyclops. Is it ewe's milk, or cow's milk, or both mixed?—
Silenus. Both . . either. . . Only pray don't swallow me.
Cyclops. By no means.——
. . . . . .
What is this crowd I see beside the stalls?
Outlaws or thieves? for near my cavern home
I see my young lambs coupled two by two
With willow bands; mixed with my cheeses lie
Their implements; and this old fellow here
Has his bald head broken with stripes.
Silenus. Ah me!
I have been beaten till I burn with fever.
Cyclops. By whom? Who laid his fist upon your head?
Silenus. Those men, because I would not suffer them
To steal your goods.
Cyclops. Did not the rascals know
I am a God, sprung from the race of heaven?
Silenus. I told them so. But they bore off your things,
And ate the cheese in spite of all I said,
And carried out the lambs: and said moreover
They'd pin you down with a three-cubit collar,
And pull your vitals out through your one eye,
Torture your back with stripes,—then, binding you,
Throw you as ballast into the ship's hold,
And then deliver you, a slave, to move
Enormous rocks, or found a vestibule.
Cyclops. In truth? Nay, haste, and place in order quickly
The cooking-knives, and heap upon the hearth,
And kindle it, a great faggot of wood.—
As soon as they are slaughtered, they shall fill
My belly, broiling warm from the live coals,
Or boiled and seethed within the bubbling caldron.

I am quite sick of the wild mountain game;
Of stags and lions I have gorged enough,
And I grow hungry for the flesh of men.
Silenus. Nay, master, something new is very pleasant
After one thing for ever, and of late
Very few strangers have approached our cave.
Ulysses. Hear, Cyclops, a plain tale on the other side.
We, wanting to buy food, came from our ship
Into the neighbourhood of your cave, and here
This old Silenus gave us in exchange
These lambs for wine, the which he took and drank;
And all by mutual compact, without force.
There is no word of truth in what he says,
For slily he was selling all your store.
Silenus. I? May you perish, wretch—
Ulysses. If I speak false!
Silenus. Cyclops, I swear by Neptune who begot thee,
By mighty Triton and by Nereus old,
Calypso and the glaucous Ocean Nymphs,
The sacred waves and all the race of fishes—
Be these the witnesses, my dear sweet master,
My darling little Cyclops, that I never
Gave any of thy stores to these false strangers!
If I speak false, may those whom most I love,
My children, perish wretchedly!
Chorus. There stop!
I saw him giving these things to the strangers.
If I speak false, then may my father perish!
But do not thou wrong hospitality.
Cyclops. You lie! I swear that he is juster far
Than Rhadamanthus—I trust more in him.
But let me ask, whence have ye sailed, O strangers?
Who are you? and what city nourished ye?
Ulysses. Our race is Ithacan.—Having destroyed
The town of Troy, the tempests of the sea
Have driven us on thy land, O Polypheme.
Cyclops. What, have ye shared in the unenvied spoil
Of the false Helen, near Scamander's stream?
Ulysses. The same, having endured a woful toil.
Cyclops. Oh basest expedition! Sailed ye not
From Greece to Phrygia for one woman's sake?
Ulysses. 'Twas the God's work—no mortal was in fault.—

But O great offspring of the Ocean King!
We pray thee, and admonish thee with freedom,
That thou do spare thy friends who visit thee,
And place no impious food within thy jaws;
For in the depths of Greece we have upreared
Temples to thy great father, which are all
His homes. The sacred bay of Tænarus
Remains inviolate, and each dim recess
Scooped high on the Malean promontory,
And aery Sunium's silver-veinèd crag
Which divine Pallas keeps unprofaned ever,
The Gerastian asylums, and whate'er
Within wide Greece our enterprise has kept
From Phrygian contumely; and in which
You have a common care, for you inhabit
The skirts of Grecian land, under the roots
Of Ætna and its crags, spotted with fire.
Turn then to converse under human laws.
Receive us shipwrecked suppliants, and provide
Food, clothes, and fire, and hospitable gifts;
Nor fixing upon oxen-piercing spits
Our limbs, so fill your belly and your jaws.'
Priam's wide land has widowed Greece enough,
And weapon-wingèd murder heaped together
Enough of dead; and wives are husbandless,
And ancient women and grey fathers wail
Their childless age. If you should roast the rest
(And 'tis a bitter feast that you prepare),
Where then would any turn? Yet be persuaded;
Forego the lust of your jawbone; prefer
Pious humanity to wicked will.
Many have bought too dear their evil joys.

Silenus. Let me advise you; do not spare a morsel
Of all his flesh. If you should eat his tongue,
You would become most eloquent, O Cyclops.

Cyclops. Wealth, my good fellow, is the wise man's god;
All other things are a pretence and boast.
What are my father's ocean promontories,
The sacred rocks whereon he dwells, to me?
Stranger, I laugh to scorn Jove's thunderbolt;
I know not that his strength is more than mine.
As to the rest I care not.—When he pours

Rain from above, I have a close pavilion
Under this rock, in which I lie supine,
Feasting on a roast calf or some wild beast,
And drinking pans of milk, and gloriously
Emulating the thunder of high heaven.
And, when the Thracian wind pours down the snow,
I wrap my body in the skins of beasts,
Kindle a fire, and bid the snow whirl on.
The earth by force, whether it will or no,
Bringing forth grass, fattens my flocks and herds,—
Which to what other God but to myself,
And this great belly, first of deities,
Should I be bound to sacrifice? I well know
The wise man's only Jupiter is this,—
To eat and drink during his little day,
And give himself no care. And as for those
Who complicate with laws the life of man,
I freely give them tears for their reward.
I will not cheat my soul of its delight,
Or hesitate in dining upon you.
And, that I may be quit of all demands,
These are my hospitable gifts;—fierce fire,
And yon ancestral caldron, which o'erbubbling
Shall finely cook your miserable flesh.
Creep in!—

. . . . . .

Ulysses. Ai, ai! I have escaped the Trojan toils,
I have escaped the sea,—and now I fall
Under the cruel grasp of one impious man!
O Pallas, mistress, Goddess, sprung from Jove,
Now, now, assist me! Mightier toils than Troy
Are these;—I totter on the chasms of peril!—
And thou who inhabitest the thrones
Of the bright stars, look, hospitable Jove,
Upon this outrage of thy deity,—
Otherwise be considered as no God!

CHORUS (*alone*).

For your gaping gulf and your gullet wide
The ravin is ready on every side.
The limbs of the strangers are cooked and done;
There is boiled meat, and roast meat, and meat from the coal.

You may chop it, and tear it, and gnash it for fun;
A hairy goat's skin contains the whole.
Let me but escape, and ferry me o'er
The stream of your wrath to a safer shore.

The Cyclops Ætnean is cruel and bold;
He murders the strangers
That sit on his hearth,
And dreads no avengers
To rise from the earth.
He roasts the men before they are cold;
He snatches them broiling from the coal,
And from the caldron pulls them whole;
And minces their flesh and gnaws their bone
With his cursèd teeth till all be gone.

Farewell, foul pavilion!
Farewell, rites of dread!
The Cyclops vermilion,
With slaughter uncloying,
Now feasts on the dead,
In the flesh of strangers joying!

Ulysses. O Jupiter! I saw within the cave
Horrible things; deeds to be feigned in words,
But not believed as being done.
Chorus. What! sawest thou the impious Polypheme
Feasting upon thy loved companions now?
Ulysses. Selecting two, the plumpest of the crowd,
He grasped them in his hands—
Chorus. Unhappy man!

* * * * *

Ulysses. Soon as we came into this craggy place,
Kindling a fire, he cast on the broad hearth
The knotty limbs of an enormous oak,
Three waggon-loads at least; and then he strewed
Upon the ground, beside the red fire-light,
His couch of pine leaves. And he milked the cows,
And, pouring forth the white milk, filled a bowl
Three cubits wide and four in depth, as much
As would contain ten amphoræ, and bound it
With ivy wreaths; then placed upon the fire
A brazen pot to boil, and made red hot

The points of spits, not sharpened with the sickle,
But with a fruit-tree bough and with the jaws
Of axes, for Ætnean slaughterings.
And, when this God-abandoned cook of hell
Had made all ready, he seized two of us,
And killed them in a kind of measured manner;—
For he flung one against the brazen rivets
Of the huge caldron; and he seized the other
By the foot's tendon, and knocked out his brains
Upon the sharp edge of the craggy stone,—
Then peeled his flesh with a great cooking-knife,
And put him down to roast. The other's limbs
He chopped into the caldron to be boiled.
And I, with the tears raining from my eyes,
Stood near the Cyclops, ministering to him;
The rest, in the recesses of the cave,
Clung to the rock like bats, bloodless with fear.
When he was filled with my companions' flesh,
He threw himself upon the ground, and sent
A loathsome exhalation from his maw.
Then a divine thought came to me. I filled
The cup of Maron, and I offered him
To taste, and said:—"Child of the Ocean God,
Behold what drink the vines of Greece produce,
The exultation and the joy of Bacchus."
He, satiated with his unnatural food,
Received it, and at one draught drank it off,
And, taking my hand, praised me:—"Thou hast given
A sweet draught after a sweet meal, dear guest."
And I, perceiving that it pleased him, filled
Another cup, well knowing that the wine
Would wound him soon, and take a sure revenge.
And the charm fascinated him, and I
Plied him cup after cup, until the drink
Had warmed his entrails, and he sang aloud
In concert with my wailing fellow-seamen
A hideous discord—and the cavern rung.
I have stolen out, so that, if you will,
You may achieve my safety and your own.
But say, do you desire or not to fly
This uncompanionable man, and dwell,
As was your wont, among the Grecian Nymphs,

Within the fanes of your belovèd God?
Your father there-within agrees to it;
But he is weak and overcome with wine,
And, caught as if with birdlime by the cup,
He claps his wings and crows in doating joy.
You who are young escape with me, and find
Bacchus your ancient friend; unsuited he
To this rude Cyclops.

Chorus. O my dearest friend,
That I could see that day, and leave for ever
The impious Cyclops!

. . . . . .

Ulysses. Listen then what a punishment I have
For this fell monster, how secure a flight
From your hard servitude.

Chorus. Oh sweeter far
Than is the music of an Asian lyre
Would be the news of Polypheme destroyed!

Ulysses. Delighted with the Bacchic drink, he goes
To call his brother Cyclopes—who inhabit
A village upon Ætna not far off.

Chorus. I understand: catching him when alone,
You think by some manœuvre to dispatch him,
Or thrust him from the precipice.

Ulysses. Oh no!
Nothing of that kind; my device is subtle.

Chorus. How then? I heard of old that thou wert wise.

Ulysses. I will dissuade him from this plan, by saying
It were unwise to give the Cyclopses
This precious drink, which, if enjoyed alone,
Would make life sweeter for a longer time.
When, vanquished by the Bacchic power, he sleeps,
There is a trunk of olive-wood within,
Whose point, having made sharp with this good sword,
I will conceal in fire, and, when I see
It is alight, will fix it, burning yet,
Within the socket of the Cyclops' eye,
And melt it out with fire. As when a man
Turns by its handle a great auger round,
Fitting the framework of a ship with beams,
So will I in the Cyclops' fiery eye
Turn round the brand, and dry the pupil up.

Chorus. Joy! I am mad with joy at your device!
Ulysses. And then with you, my friends, and the old man,
We'll load the hollow depth of our black ship,
And row with double strokes from this dread shore.
Chorus. May I, as in libations to a God,
Share in the blinding him with the red brand?
I would have some communion in his death.
Ulysses. Doubtless; the brand is a great brand to hold.
Chorus. Oh! I would lift an hundred waggon-loads,
If like a wasp's nest I could scoop the eye out
Of the detested Cyclops!
Ulysses. Silence now!
Ye know the close device—and, when I call,
Look ye obey the masters of the craft.
I will not save *myself*, and leave behind
My comrades in the cave: I might escape,
Having got clear from that obscure recess,
But 'twere unjust to leave in jeopardy
The dear companions who sailed here with me.

CHORUS.

Come! who is first, that with his hand
Will urge down the burning brand
Through the lids, and quench and pierce
The Cyclops' eye so fiery fierce?

A Song is heard within.

SEMICHORUS I.

Listen! listen! He is coming,
A most hideous discord humming—
Drunken, museless, awkward, yelling—
Far along his rocky dwelling.
Let us with some comic spell
Teach the yet unteachable.
By all means he must be blinded,
If my counsel be but minded.

SEMICHORUS II.

Happy thou, made odorous
With the dew which sweet grapes weep,
To the village hastening thus,
Seek the vines that soothe to sleep,
Having first embraced thy friend;
Thou, in luxury without end,
With the strings of yellow hair

Of thy voluptuous leman fair
Shalt sit playing on a bed . . .
Speak, what door is openèd?

CYCLOPS.

Ha! ha! ha! I'm full of wine,
Heavy with the joy divine,
With the young feast oversated.
Like a merchant's vessel freighted
To the water's edge, my crop
Is laden to the gullet's top.
The fresh meadow grass of Spring
Tempts me forth, thus wandering
To my brothers on the mountains,
Who shall share the wine's sweet fountains.
Bring the cask, O stranger, bring!

CHORUS.

One with eyes the fairest
Cometh from his dwelling;
Some one loves thee, rarest,
Bright beyond my telling.
In thy grace thou shinest
Like some Nymph divinest
In her caverns dewy;—
All delights pursue thee!
Soon pied flowers, sweet-breathing,
Shall thy head be wreathing.

Ulysses. Listen, O Cyclops, for I am well skilled
In Bacchus whom I gave thee of to drink.
Cyclops. What sort of God is Bacchus then accounted?
Ulysses. The greatest among men for joy of life.
Cyclops. I gulped him down with very great delight.
Ulysses. This is a God who never injures men.
Cyclops. How does the God like living in a skin?
Ulysses. He is content wherever he is put.
Cyclops. Gods should not have their body in a skin.
Ulysses. If he give joy, what is his skin to you?
Cyclops. I hate the skin, but love the wine within.
Ulysses. Stay here; now drink, and make your spirit glad.
Cyclops. Should I not share this liquor with my brothers?
Ulysses. Keep it yourself, and be more honoured so.
Cyclops. I were more useful, giving to my friends.

Ulysses. But village mirth breeds contests, broils, and blows.
Cyclops. When I am drunk none shall lay hands on me.
Ulysses. A drunken man is better within doors.
Cyclops. He is a fool who drinking loves not mirth.
Ulysses. But he is wise who drunk remains at home.
Cyclops. What shall I do, Silenus? Shall I stay?
Silenus. Stay—for what need have you of pot-companions?
Cyclops. Indeed, this place is closely carpeted
With flowers and grass.
Silenus. And in the sun-warm noon
'Tis sweet to drink. Lie down beside me now,
Placing your mighty sides upon the ground.
Cyclops. What do you put the cup behind me for?
Silenus. That no one here may touch it.
Cyclops. Thievish one!
You want to drink;—here, place it in the midst.
And thou, O stranger, tell how art thou called?
Ulysses. My name is Nobody. What favour now
Shall I receive to praise you at your hands?
Cyclops. I'll feast on you the last of your companions.
Ulysses. You grant your guest a fair reward, O Cyclops.
Cyclops. Ha! what is this? Stealing the wine, you rogue!
Silenus. It was this stranger kissing me, because
I looked so beautiful.
Cyclops. You shall repent
For kissing the coy wine that loves you not.
Silenus. By Jupiter! you said that I am fair.
Cyclops. Pour out, and only give me the cup full.
Silenus. How is it mixed? Let me observe.
Cyclops. Curse you!
Give it me so.
Silenus. Not till I see you wear
That coronal, and taste the cup to you.
Cyclops. Thou wily traitor!
Silenus. But the wine is sweet.
Ay, you will roar if you are caught in drinking.
Cyclops. See now, my lip is clean and all my beard.
Silenus. Now put your elbow right, and drink again.
As you see me drink— . . . . .
Cyclops. How now?
Silenus. Ye Gods, what a delicious gulp!
Cyclops. Guest, take it;—*you* pour out the wine for me.

Ulysses. The wine is well accustomed to my hand.
Cyclops. Pour out the wine!
Ulysses. I pour; only be silent.
Cyclops. Silence is a hard task to him who drinks.
Ulysses. Take it and drink it off; leave not a dreg.
[*Aside*] Oh that the drinker died with his own draught!
Cyclops. Papai! the vine must be a sapient plant.
Ulysses. If you drink much after a mighty feast,
Moistening your thirsty maw, you will sleep well;
If you leave aught, Bacchus will dry you up.
Cyclops. Ho! ho! I can scarce rise. What pure delight!
The heavens and earth appear to whirl about
Confusedly. I see the throne of Jove,
And the clear congregation of the Gods.
Now, if the Graces tempted me to kiss,
I would not, for the loveliest of them all
I would not leave this Ganymede.
Silenus. Polypheme,
I am the Ganymede of Jupiter.
Cyclops. By Jove you are! I bore you off from Dardanus.

. . . . .

ULYSSES *and the* CHORUS.

Ulysses. Come, boys of Bacchus, children of high race!
This man within is folded up in sleep,
And soon will vomit flesh from his fell maw.
The brand under the shed thrusts out its smoke;
No preparation needs, but to burn out
The monster's eye;—but bear yourselves like men.
Chorus. We will have courage like the adamant rock.
All things are ready for you here. Go in,
Before our father shall perceive the noise.
Ulysses. Vulcan, Ætnean king! burn out with fire
The shining eye of this thy neighbouring monster!
And thou, O Sleep, nursling of gloomy Night,
Descend unmixed on this God-hated beast!
And suffer not Ulysses and his comrades,
Returning from their famous Trojan toils,
To perish by this man, who cares not eithe
For God or mortal; or I needs must think
That Chance is a supreme divinity,
And things divine are subject to her power.

CHORUS.

Soon a crab the throat will seize
Of him who feeds upon his guest,—
Fire will burn his lamp-like eyes
In revenge of such a feast!
A great oak-stump now is lying
In the ashes yet undying.
Come, Maron, come!
Raging let him fix the doom,
Let him tear the eyelid up,
Of the Cyclops—that his cup
May be evil!
Oh! I long to dance and revel
With sweet Bromian, long desired,
In loved ivy-wreaths attired,
Leaving this abandoned home!—
Will the moment ever come?

Ulysses. Be silent, ye wild things! Nay, hold your peace,
And keep your lips quite close; dare not to breathe,
Or spit, or e'en wink, lest ye wake the monster,
Until his eye be tortured out with fire.
Chorus. Nay, we are silent, and we chaw the air.
Ulysses. Come now, and lend a hand to the great stake
Within—it is delightfully red-hot.
Chorus. You then command who first should seize the stake
To burn the Cyclops' eye, that all may share
In the great enterprise.
Semichorus I. We are too far;
We cannot at this distance from the door
Thrust fire into his eye.
Semichorus II. And we just now
Have become lame; cannot move hand nor foot.
Chorus. The same thing has occurred to us;—our ankles
Are sprained with standing here, I know not how.
Ulysses. What, sprained with standing still?
Chorus. And there is dust
Or ashes in our eyes, I know not whence.
Ulysses. Cowardly dogs! ye will not aid me, then?
Chorus. With pitying my own back and my back-bone,
And with not wishing all my teeth knocked out,
This cowardice comes of itself. But stay!

I know a famous Orphic incantation
To make the brand stick of its own accord
Into the skull of this one-eyed Son of Earth.
Ulysses. Of old I knew ye thus by nature; now
I know ye better.—I will use the aid
Of my own comrades.—Yet, though weak of hand,
Speak cheerfully, that so ye may awaken
The courage of my friends with your blithe words.
Chorus. This I will do with peril of my life,
And blind you with my exhortations, Cyclops.

Hasten and thrust!
And parch up to dust
The eye of the beast
Who feeds on his guest.
Burn and blind
The Ætnean hind!
Scoop and draw!
But beware lest he claw
Your limbs near his maw.

Cyclops. Ah me! my eyesight is parched up to cinders!
Chorus. What a sweet pæan! Sing me that again!
Cyclops. Ah me! indeed, what woe has fallen upon me?
But, wretched Nothings, think ye not to flee
Out of this rock! I, standing at the outlet,
Will bar the way, and catch you as you pass.
Chorus. What are you roaring out, Cyclops?
Cyclops. I perish!
Chorus. For you are wicked.
Cyclops. And besides miserable.
Chorus. What, did you fall into the fire when drunk?
Cyclops. 'Twas Nobody destroyed me.
Chorus. Why then, no one
Can be to blame.
Cyclops. I say 'twas Nobody
Who blinded me.
Chorus. Why then you are not blind.
Cyclops. I wish you were as blind as I am!
Chorus. Nay,
It cannot be that no one made you blind.
Cyclops. You jeer me; where, I ask, is Nobody?
Chorus. No-where, O Cyclops.

Cyclops. It was that stranger ruined me!—the wretch
First gave me wine, and then burnt out my eye,
For wine is strong and hard to struggle with.
Have they escaped, or are they yet within?
Chorus. They stand under the darkness of the rock,
And cling to it.
Cyclops. At my right hand or left?
Chorus. Close on your right.
Cyclops. Where?
Chorus. Near the rock itself.
You have them.
Cyclops. Oh misfortune on misfortune!
I've cracked my skull!
Chorus. Now they escape you there.
Cyclops. Not there, although you say so.
Chorus. Not on that side.
Cyclops. Where then?
Chorus. They creep about you on your left.
Cyclops. Ah! I am mocked! They jeer me in my ills.
Chorus. Not there! he is a little there beyond you.
Cyclops. Detested wretch! where are you?
Ulysses. Far from you
I keep with care this body of Ulysses.
Cyclops. What do you say? You proffer a new name.
Ulysses. My father named me so. And I have taken
A full revenge for your unnatural feast;
I should have done ill to have burned down Troy,
And not revenged the murder of my comrades.
Cyclops. Ai! ai! the ancient oracle is accomplished;
It said that I should have my eyesight blinded
By you coming from Troy; yet it foretold
That you should pay the penalty for this
By wandering long over the homeless sea.
Ulysses. I bid thee weep!—Consider what I say;
I go towards the shore, to drive my ship
To mine own land o'er the Sicilian wave.
Cyclops. Not so, if whelming you with this huge stone
I can crush you and all your men together!
I will descend upon the shore, though blind,
Groping my way adown the steep ravine.
Chorus. And we, the shipmates of Ulysses now,
Will serve our Bacchus all our happy lives.

1819.

EPIGRAMS FROM THE GREEK.

I.—SPIRIT OF PLATO.

"EAGLE! why soarest thou above that tomb?
To what sublime and star-y-paven home
Floatest thou?"
"I am the image of swift Plato's spirit,
Ascending heaven:—Athens does inherit
His corpse below."

II.

A MAN who was about to hang himself,
Finding a purse, then threw away his rope;
The owner, coming to reclaim his pelf,
The halter found, and used it. So is hope
Changed for despair—one laid upon the shelf,
We take the other. Under heaven's high cope
Fortune is God: all you endure and do
Depends on circumstance as much as you.

FROM PLATO.

I.—TO STELLA.

THOU wert the Morning Star among the living,
Ere thy fair light had fled;—
Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving
New splendour to the dead.

II.

KISSING Helena, together
With my kiss, my soul beside it
Came to my lips, and there I kept it,—
For the poor thing had wandered thither,
To follow where the kiss should guide it.
Oh cruel I to intercept it!

FROM MOSCHUS.

Τὰν ἅλα τὰν γλαυκὰν ὅταν ὤνεμος ἀτρέμα βάλλῃ,—κ. τ. λ.

I.

WHEN winds that move not its calm surface sweep
The azure sea, I love the land no more:
The smiles of the serene and tranquil deep
Tempt my unquiet mind. But, when the roar

Of ocean's grey abyss resounds, and foam
Gathers upon the sea, and vast waves burst,
I turn from the drear aspect to the home
Of earth and its deep woods, where, interspersed,
When winds blow loud, pines make sweet melody.
Whose house is some lone bark, whose toil the sea,
Whose prey the wandering fish, an evil lot
Has chosen. But I my languid limbs will fling
Beneath the plane, where the brook's murmuring
Moves the calm spirit but disturbs it not.

II.

PAN loved his neighbour Echo; but that child
Of Earth and Air pined for the Satyr leaping;
The Satyr loved with wasting madness wild
The bright nymph Lyda:—and so the three went weeping.
As Pan loved Echo, Echo loved the Satyr;
The Satyr, Lyda:—and thus love consumed them.
And thus—to each which was a woful matter—
To bear what they inflicted Justice doomed them;
For, in as much as each might hate the lover,
Each, loving, so was hated.—Ye that love not,
Be warned—in thought turn this example over,
That, *when* ye love, the like return ye prove not.

FROM VIRGIL.

THE TENTH ECLOGUE. [v. 1–26].

MELODIOUS Arethusa, o'er my verse
Shed thou once more the spirit of thy stream:
Who denies verse to Gallus? So, when thou
Glidest beneath the green and purple gleam
Of Syracusan waters, mayst thou flow
Unmingled with the bitter Doric dew!
Begin, and, whilst the goats are browzing now
The soft leaves, in our way let us pursue
The melancholy loves of Gallus. List!
We sing not to the dead: the wild woods knew
His sufferings, and their echoes . .
Young Naiads, . . in what far woodlands wild
Wandered ye when unworthy love possessed
Your Gallus? Not where Pindus is up-piled,
Nor where Parnassus' sacred mount, nor where

Aonian Aganippe expands
The laurels and the myrtle-copses dim.
The pine-encircled mountain, Mænalus,
The cold crags of Lycæus, weep for him;
And Sylvan, crowned with rustic coronals,
Came shaking in his speed the budding wands
And heavy lilies which he bore: we knew
Pan the Arcadian.

. . . . . .

What madness is this, Gallus? Thy heart's care
With willing steps pursues another there.

FROM DANTE.

DANTE ALLIGHIERI TO GUIDO CAVALCANTI—SONNET.

GUIDO, I would that Lapo, thou, and I,
Led by some strong enchantment, might ascend
A magic ship whose charmèd sails should fly
With winds at will, where'er our thoughts might wend,—
So that no change nor any evil chance
Should mar our joyous voyage, but it might be
That even satiety should still enhance
Between our hearts their strict community;
And that the bounteous wizard then would place
Vanna and Bice and my gentle love
Companions of our wandering, and would grace
With passionate talk, wherever we might rove,
Our time, and each were as content and free
As I believe that thou and I should be.

1816.

THE FIRST CANZONE OF THE CONVITO.

I.

YE who intelligent the Third Heaven move,
Hear the discourse which is within my heart,
Which cannot be declared, it seems so new.
The Heaven whose course follows your power and art,
O gentle creatures that ye are! me drew,
And therefore may I dare to speak to you
Even of the life which now I live,—and yet

I pray that ye will hear me when I cry,
And tell of mine own Heart this novelty;
How the lamenting Spirit moans in it,
And how a voice there murmurs against her
Who came on the refulgence of your sphere.

II.

A sweet Thought, which was once the life within
This heavy Heart, many a time and oft
Went up before our Father's feet, and there
It saw a glorious Lady throned aloft;
And its sweet talk of her my Soul did win,
So that I said "Thither I too will fare."
That Thought is fled; and one doth now appear
Which tyrannizes me with such fierce stress
That my heart trembles—ye may see it leap—
And on another Lady bids me keep
Mine eyes, and says: "Who would have blessedness,
Let him but look upon that Lady's eyes;
Let him not fear the agony of sighs."

III.

This lowly Thought, which once would talk with me
Of a bright Seraph sitting crowned on high,
Found such a cruel foe, it died; and so
My Spirit wept—the grief is hot even now—
And said: "Alas for me! how swift could flee
That piteous Thought which did my life console!"
And the afflicted one, . . . questioning
Mine eyes if such a Lady saw they never,
And why they would . . .
I said: "Beneath those eyes might stand for ever
He whom . . regards must kill with . .
To have known their power stood me in little stead;
Those eyes have looked on me, and I am dead."

IV.

"Thou art not dead, but thou hast wanderèd,
Thou Soul of ours who thyself dost fret,"
A Spirit of gentle Love beside me said:
"For that fair Lady whom thou dost regret
Hath so transformed the life which thou hast led,
Thou scornest it, so worthless art thou made.

And see how meek, how pitiful, how staid,
Yet courteous, in her majesty she is.
And still call thou her 'Woman' in thy thought;
Her whom, if thou thyself deceivest not,
Thou wilt behold decked with such loveliness
That thou wilt cry: '[Love], only Lord, lo here
Thy handmaiden! Do what thou wilt with her.'"

V.

My Song, I fear that thou wilt find but few
Who fitly shall conceive thy reasoning,
Of such hard matter dost thou entertain;
Whence, if by misadventure chance should bring
Thee to base company (as chance may do)
Quite unaware of what thou dost contain,
I prithee comfort thy sweet self again,
My last delight; tell them that they are dull,
And bid them own that thou art beautiful.

1820.

MATILDA GATHERING FLOWERS.

[From the "Purgatorio," canto 28, l. 1-51.]

AND, earnest to explore within—around—
The divine wood whose thick green living woof
Tempered the young day to the sight, I wound

Up the green slope, beneath the forest's roof,
With slow soft steps leaving the mountain's steep;
And sought those inmost labyrinths, motion-proof
Against the air that, in that stillness deep
And solemn, struck upon my forehead bare
The slow soft stroke of a continuous sleep;

In which the . . leaves tremblingly were
All bent towards that part where earliest
The sacred hill obscures the morning air.

Yet were they not so shaken from their rest
But that the birds, perched on the utmost spray,
Incessantly renewing their blithe quest,

With perfect joy received the early day,
Singing within the glancing leaves, whose sound
Kept a low burthen to their roundelay,

Such as from bough to bough gathers around
The pine forest on bleak Chiassi's shore,
When Æolus Sirocco has unbound.

My slow steps had already borne me o'er
Such space within the antique wood that I
Perceived not where I entered any more,

When lo! a stream whose little waves went by,
Bending towards the left through grass that grew
Upon its bank, impeded suddenly

My going on. Water of purest hue
On earth would appear turbid and impure
Compared with this, whose unconcealing dew,

Dark, dark, yet clear, moved under the obscure
Eternal shades, whose interwoven looms
The rays of moon or sun light ne'er endure.

I moved not with my feet, but 'mid the glooms
Pierced with my charmèd eye, contemplating
The mighty multitude of fresh May blooms

That starred that night; when (even as a thing
That suddenly, for blank astonishment,
Charms every sense, and makes all thought take wing)

A solitary woman! and she went
Singing, and gathering flower after flower,
With which her way was painted and besprent.

"Bright lady, who, if looks had ever power
To bear true witness of the heart within,
Dost bask under the beams of love, come lower

Towards this bank! I prithee let me win
This much of thee, to come, that I may hear
Thy song. Like Proserpine in Enna's glen

Thou seemest to my fancy; singing here,
And gathering flowers, as that fair maiden when
She lost the Spring, and Ceres her more dear."

1820.

SCENES FROM THE MAGICO PRODIGIOSO OF CALDERON.

CYPRIAN *as a Student;* CLARIN *and* MOSCON *as poor Scholars, with books.*

Cyprian. IN the sweet solitude of this calm place,
This intricate wild wilderness of trees,
And flowers, and undergrowth of odorous plants,
Leave me; the books you brought out of the house
To me are ever best society.
And, whilst with glorious festival and song
Antioch now celebrates the consecration
Of a proud temple to great Jupiter,
And bears his image in loud jubilee
To its new shrine, I would consume what still
Lives of the dying day in studious thought,
Far from the throng and turmoil. You, my friends,
Go and enjoy the festival; it will
Be worth the labour. And return for me
When the sun seeks its grave among the billows
Which among dim grey clouds on the horizon
Dance, like white plumes upon a hearse;—and here
I shall expect you.

Moscon. I cannot bring my mind,
Great as my haste to see the festival
Certainly is, to leave you, sir, without
Just saying some three or four hundred words.
How is it possible that on a day
Of such festivity you can bring your mind
To come forth to a solitary country
With three or four old books, and turn your back
On all this mirth?

Clarin. My master's in the right;
There is not anything more tiresome
Than a procession day, with troops of men,
And dances, and all that.

Moscon. From first to last,
Clarin, you are a temporizing flatterer;

You praise not what *you* feel, but what *he* does;—
Toadeater!
Clarin. You lie—under a mistake;
For this is the most civil sort of lie
That can be given to a man's face. I now
Say what I think.
Cyprian. Enough, you foolish fellows;
Puffed up with your own doating ignorance,
You always take the two sides of one question.
Now go; and, as I said, return for me
When night falls, veiling in its shadows wide
This glorious fabric of the universe.
Moscon. (*to Clarin.*) How happens it, although you can maintain
The folly of enjoying festivals,
That yet you go there?
Clarin. Nay, the consequence
Is clear:—who ever did what he advises
Others to do?—
Moscon. Would that my feet were wings,
So would I fly to Livia! [*Exit.*
Clarin. To speak truth,
Livia is she who has surprised *my* heart;
But he is more than half way there.—Soho!
Livia, I come; good sport, Livia, soho! [*Exit.*
Cyprian. Now, since I am alone, let me examine
The question which has long disturbed my mind
With doubt, since first I read in Plinius
The words of mystic import and deep sense
In which he defines God. My intellect
Can find no God with whom these marks and signs
Fitly agree. It is a hidden truth
Which I must fathom. [*Reads.*

Enter the DEMON *as a fine Gentleman.*

Demon. Search even as thou wilt,
But thou shalt never find what I can hide.
Cyprian. What noise is that among the boughs? Who moves?
What art thou?
Demon. 'Tis a foreign gentleman.
Even from this morning I have lost my way
In this wild place; and my poor horse, at last

Quite overcome, has stretched himself upon
The enamelled tapestry of this mossy mountain,
And feeds and rests at the same time. I was
Upon my way to Antioch upon business
Of some importance; but, wrapped up in cares,
(Who is exempt from this inheritance?)
I parted from my company, and lost
My way, and lost my servants and my comrades.

Cyprian. 'Tis singular that, even within the sight
Of the high towers of Antioch, you could lose
Your way. Of all the avenues and green paths
Of this wild wood, there is not one but leads,
As to its centre, to the walls of Antioch;
Take which you will, you cannot miss your road.

Demon. And such is ignorance! Even in the sight
Of knowledge, it can draw no profit from it.
But, as it still is early, and as I
Have no acquaintances in Antioch,
Being a stranger there, I will even wait
The few surviving hours of the day,
Until the night shall conquer it. I see,
Both by your dress and by the books in which
You find delight and company, that you
Are a great student;—for my part, I feel
Much sympathy with such pursuits.

Cyprian. Have you
Studied much?

Demon. No;—and yet I know enough
Not to be wholly ignorant.

Cyprian. Pray, sir,
What science may you know?

Demon. Many.

Cyprian. Alas!
Much pains must we expend on one alone,
And even then attain it not;—but you
Have the presumption to assert that you
Know many without study.

Demon. And with truth.
For, in the country whence I come, sciences
Require no learning,—they are known.

Cyprian. Oh! would
I were of that bright country! for, in this,

The more we study, we the more discover
Our ignorance.
Demon. It is so true that I
Had so much arrogance as to oppose
The chair of the most high Professorship,
And obtained many votes; and, though I lost,
The attempt was still more glorious than the failure
Could be dishonourable. If you believe not,
Let us refer it to dispute respecting
That which you know best; and, although I know not
The opinion you maintain, and though it be
The true one, I will take the contrary.
Cyprian. The offer gives me pleasure.—I am now
Debating with myself upon a passage
Of Plinius, and my mind is racked with doubt
To understand and know who is the God
Of whom he speaks.
Demon. It is a passage, if
I recollect it right, couched in these words:
"God is one supreme goodness, one pure essence,
One substance, and one sense; all sight, all hands."
Cyprian. 'Tis true.
Demon. What difficulty find you here
Cyprian. I do not recognize among the Gods
The God defined by Plinius. If he must
Be supreme goodness, even Jupiter
Is not supremely good; because we see
His deeds are evil, and his attributes
Tainted with mortal weakness. In what manner
Can supreme goodness be consistent with
The passions of humanity?
Demon. The wisdom
Of the old world masked with the names of Gods
The attributes of Nature and of Man;
A sort of popular philosophy.
Cyprian. This reply will not satisfy me, for
Such awe is due to the high name of God
That ill should never be imputed. Then,
Examining the question with more care,
It follows that the Gods should always will
That which is best, were they supremely good.
How then does one will one thing—one, another?

And, that you may not say that I allege
Poetical or philosophic learning,
Consider the ambiguous responses
Of their oracular statues; from two shrines
Two armies shall obtain the assurance of
One victory. Is it not indisputable
That two contending wills can never lead
To the same end? And, being opposite,
If one be good is not the other evil?
Evil in God is inconceivable;
But supreme goodness fails among the Gods,
Without their union.

Demon. I deny your major.
These responses are means towards some end
Unfathomed by our intellectual beam.
They are the work of providence; and more
The battle's loss may profit those who lose
Than victory advantage those who win.

Cyprian. That I admit; and yet that God should not
(Falsehood is incompatible with deity)
Assure the victory. It would be enough
To have permitted the defeat. If God
Be all sight,—God, who beheld the truth,
Would not have given assurance of an end
Never to be accomplished. Thus, although
The Deity may, according to his attributes,
Be well distinguished into persons, yet,
Even in the minutest circumstance,
His essence must be one.

Demon. To attain the end,
The affections of the actors in the scene
Must have been thus influenced by his voice.

Cyprian. But for a purpose thus subordinate
He might have employed genii, good or evil,—
A sort of spirits called so by the learned,
Who roam about inspiring good or evil,
And from whose influence and existence we
May well infer our immortality.
Thus God might easily, without descending
To a gross falsehood in his proper person,
Have moved the affections, by this mediation,
To the just point.

Demon. These trifling contradictions
Do not suffice to impugn the unity
Of the high Gods. In things of great importance
They still appear unanimous. Consider
That glorious fabric—man; *his* workmanship
Is stamped with one conception.
Cyprian. Who made man
Must have, methinks, the advantage of the others.
If they are equal, might they not have risen
In opposition to the work, and, being
"All hands," according to our author here,
Have still destroyed even as the other made?
If equal in their power, and only unequal
In opportunity, which of the two
Will remain conqueror?
Demon. On impossible
And false hypothesis there can be built
No argument. Say, what do you infer
From this?
Cyprian. That there must be a mighty God;
Of supreme goodness and of highest grace;
All sight, all hands, all truth, infallible;
Without an equal and without a rival;
The cause of all things and the effect of nothing;
One power, one will, one substance, and one essence;
And (in whatever persons, one or two,
His attributes may be distinguished) one
Sovereign power, one solitary essence;
One cause of all cause. [*They rise.*
Demon. How can I impugn
So clear a consequence?
Cyprian. Do you regret
My victory?
Demon. Who but regrets a check
In rivalry of wit? I could reply
And urge new difficulties, but will now
Depart, for I hear steps of men approaching,
And it is time that I should now pursue
My journey to the city.
Cyprian. Go in peace!
Demon. Remain in peace! [*Aside*] Since thus it profits him
To study, I will wrap his senses up

In sweet oblivion of all thought but of
A piece of excellent beauty; and, as I
Have power given me to wage enmity
Against Justina's soul, I will extract
From one effect two vengeances. [*Exit.*
Cyprian. I never
Met a more learned person.—Let me now
Revolve this doubt again with careful mind. [*He reads.*

Enter LELIO *and* FLORO.

Lelio. Here stop. These toppling rocks and tangled boughs,
Impenetrable by the noonday beam,
Shall be sole witnesses of what we—
Floro. Draw!
If *there* were words, here is the place for deeds!
Lelio. Thou needest not instruct me; well I know
That in the field the silent tongue of steel
Speaks thus. [*They fight.*
Cyprian. Ha! what is this? Lelio, Floro,
Be it enough that Cyprian stands between you,
Although unarmed!
Lelio. Whence comest thou, to stand
Between me and my vengeance?
Floro. From what rocks
And desert cells?

Enter MOSCON *and* CLARIN.

Moscon. Run, run, for where we left
My master I hear the clash of swords!
Clarin. I never
Run to approach things of this sort, but only
To avoid them. Sir! Cyprian! sir!
Cyprian. Be silent, fellows!—What! two friends who are
In blood and fame the eyes and hope of Antioch—
One, of the noble men of the Colatti,
The other, son of the Governor,—adventure
And cast away, on some slight cause no doubt,
Two lives, the honour of their country?
Lelio. Cyprian,
Although my high respect towards thy person
Holds now my sword suspended, thou canst not
Restore it to the slumber of its scabbard.

Thou knowest more of science than the duel;
For, when two men of honour take the field,
No counsel nor respect can make them friends,
But one must die in the pursuit.
Floro. I pray
That you depart hence with your people, and
Leave us to finish what we have begun,
Without advantage.
Cyprian. Though you may imagine
That I know little of the laws of duel,
Which vanity and valour instituted,
You are in error. By my birth I am
Held no less than yourselves to know the limits
Of honour and of infamy, nor has study
Quenched the free spirit which first ordered them.
And thus to me, as to one well experienced
In the false quicksands of the sea of honour,
You may refer the merits of the case;
And, if I should perceive in your relation
That either has the right to satisfaction
From the other, I give you my word of honour
To leave you.
Lelio. Under this condition then
I will relate the cause, and you will cede
And must confess the impossibility
Of compromise; for the same lady is
Beloved by Floro and myself.
Floro. It seems
Much to me that the light of day should look
Upon that idol of my heart—but he!—
Leave us to fight, according to thy word.
Cyprian. Permit one question further: is the lady
Impossible to hope or not?
Lelio. She is
So excellent that, if the light of day
Should excite Floro's jealousy, it were
Without just cause, for even the light of day
Trembles to gaze on her.
Cyprian. Would you for your
Part marry her?
Floro. Such is my confidence.
Cyprian. And you?

Lelio. Oh would that I could lift my hope
So high! for, though she is extremely poor,
Her virtue is her dowry.
Cyprian. And, if you both
Would marry her, is it not weak and vain,
Culpable and unworthy, thus beforehand
To slur her honour? What would the world say
If one should slay the other, and if she
Should afterwards espouse the murderer?

[*The Rivals agree to refer their quarrel to* CYPRIAN; *who, in consequence, visits* JUSTINA, *and becomes enamoured of her: she disdains him, and he retires to a solitary sea-shore.*

SCENE II.

CYPRIAN.

O memory! permit it not
That the tyrant of my thought
Be another soul that still
Holds dominion o'er the will;
That would refuse, but can no more,
To bend, and tremble, to adore.
Vain idolatry!—I saw,
And gazing became blind with error.
Weak ambition, which the awe
Of her presence bound to terror!
So beautiful she was—and I,
Between my love and jealousy,
Am so convulsed with hope and fear,
Unworthy as it may appear,—
So bitter is the life I live,
That, hear me, Hell! I now would give
To thy most detested spirit
My soul, for ever to inherit,
To suffer punishment and pine,
So this woman may be mine.
Hear'st thou, Hell! dost thou reject it?
My soul is offered!
Demon (*unseen.*) I accept it.
[*Tempest with thunder and lightning.*

CYPRIAN.

What is this! ye heavens for ever pure,
At once intensely radiant and obscure!

Athwart the etherial halls
The lightning's arrow and the thunder-balls
The day affright,
As from the horizon round
Burst with earthquake sound
In mighty torrents the electric fountains:—
Clouds quench the sun, and thunder-smoke
Strangles the air, and fire eclipses heaven.
Philosophy, thou canst not even
Compel their causes underneath thy yoke!
From yonder clouds even to the waves below
The fragments of a single ruin choke
Imagination's flight;
For on flakes of surge, like feathers light,
The ashes of the desolation cast
Upon the gloomy blast
Tell of the footsteps of the storm;
And nearer see the melancholy form
Of a great ship, the outcast of the sea,
Drives miserably!
And it must fly the pity of the port,
Or perish, and its last and sole resort
Is its own raging enemy.
The terror of the thrilling cry
Was a fatal prophecy
Of coming Death, who hovers now
Upon that shattered prow,
That they who die not may be dying still.
And not alone the insane elements
Are populous with wild portents,
But that sad ship is as a miracle
Of sudden ruin, for it drives so fast
It seems as if it had arrayed its form
With the headlong storm.
It strikes—I almost feel the shock!—
It stumbles on a jagged rock!—
Sparkles of blood on the white foam are cast!

A tempest—All exclaim within,

We are all lost!

Demon (within.) Now from this plank will I
Pass to the land, and thus fulfil my scheme.

CYPRIAN.

As in contempt of the elemental rage,
A man comes forth in safety; while the ship's
Great form is in a watery eclipse
Obliterated from the ocean's page.
And round its wreck the huge sea-monsters sit,
A horrid conclave, and the whistling wave
Is heaped over its carcase, like a grave.

The DEMON *enters, as escaped from the sea.*

Demon (*aside.*) It was essential to my purposes
To wake a tumult on the sapphire ocean;
That in this unknown form I might at length
Wipe out the blot of the discomfiture
Sustained upon the mountain, and assail
With a new war the soul of Cyprian,
Forging the instruments of his destruction
Even from his love and from his wisdom.—[*Aloud*]—O
Belovèd Earth, dear mother, in thy bosom
I seek a refuge from the monster who
Precipitates himself upon me!

Cyprian. Friend,
Collect thyself; and be the memory
Of thy late suffering and thy greatest sorrow
But as a shadow of the past,—for nothing
Beneath the circle of the moon but flows
And changes, and can never know repose.

Demon. And who art thou before whose feet my fate
Has prostrated me?

Cyprian. One who, moved with pity,
Would soothe its stings.

Demon. Oh! that can never be!
No solace can my lasting sorrows find!

Cyprian. Wherefore?

Demon. Because my happiness is lost.
Yet I lament what has long ceased to be
The object of desire or memory,
And my life is not life.

Cyprian. Now, since the fury
Of this earthquaking hurricane is still,
And the crystalline heaven has re-assumed
Its windless calm so quickly that it seems

As if its heavy wrath had been awakened
Only to overwhelm that vessel,—speak,
Who art thou, and whence comest thou?
Demon. Far more
My coming hither cost than thou hast seen,
Or I can tell. Among my misadventures
This shipwreck is the least. Wilt thou hear?
Cyprian. Speak.
Demon. Since thou desirest, I will then unveil
Myself to thee;—for in myself I am
A world of happiness and misery;
This I have lost, and that I must lament
For ever. In my attributes I stood
So high and so heroically great,
In lineage so supreme, and with a genius
Which penetrated with a glance the world
Beneath my feet, that, won by my high merit,
A king—whom I may call the King of kings,
Because all others tremble in their pride
Before the terrors of his countenance—
In his high palace roofed with brightest gems
Of living light—call them the stars of heaven—
Named me his counsellor. But the high praise
Stung me with pride and envy; and I rose
In mighty competition, to ascend
His seat, and place my foot triumphantly
Upon his subject thrones. Chastised, I know
The depth to which ambition falls. Too mad
Was the attempt; and yet more mad were now
Repentance of the irrevocable deed.
Therefore I chose this ruin with the glory
Of not to be subdued, before the shame
Of reconciling me with him who reigns,
By coward cession.—Nor was I alone,
Nor am I now, nor shall I be, alone.
And there was hope, and there may still be hope;
For many suffrages among his vassals
Hailed me their lord and king, and many still
Are mine, and many more perchance shall be.
Thus vanquished, though in fact victorious,
I left his seat of empire, from mine eye
Shooting forth poisonous lightning, while my words

With inauspicious thunderings shook heaven,
Proclaiming vengeance, public as my wrong,
And imprecating on his prostrate slaves
Rapine and death and outrage. Then I sailed
Over the mighty fabric of the world,
A pirate ambushed in its pathless sands,
A lynx crouched watchfully among its caves
And craggy shores; and I have wandered over
The expanse of these wide glassy wildernesses
In this great ship, whose bulk is now dissolved
In the light breathings of the invisible wind,
And which the sea has made a dustless ruin,
Seeking ever a mountain, through whose forests
I seek a man whom I must now compel
To keep his word with me. I came arrayed
In tempest; and, although my power could well
Bridle the forest winds in their career,
For other causes I forbore to soothe
Their fury to Favonian gentleness.
I could, and would not.—[*Aside*] (Thus I wake in him
A love of magic art.)—Let not this tempest,
Nor the succeeding calm, excite thy wonder;
For by my art the sun would turn as pale
As his weak sister, with unwonted fear;
And in my wisdom are the orbs of heaven
Written as in a record. I have pierced
The flaming circles of their wondrous spheres,
And know them as thou knowest every corner
Of this dim spot. Let it not seem to thee
That I boast vainly; wouldst thou that I work
A charm over this waste and savage wood,
This Babylon of crags and aged trees,
Filling its leafy coverts with a horror
Thrilling and strange? I am the friendless guest
Of these wild oaks and pines:—and, as from thee
I have received the hospitality
Of this rude place, I offer thee the fruit
Of years of toil in recompense. Whate'er
Thy wildest dream presented to thy thought
As object of desire, that shall be thine.

. . . . .

And thenceforth shall so firm an amity

'Twixt thee and me be that neither Fortune,
The monstrous phantom which pursues success,
That careful miser, that free prodigal,
Who ever alternates with changeful hand
Evil and good, reproach and fame; nor time,
That lodestar of the ages, to whose beam
The wingèd years speed o'er the intervals
Of their unequal revolutions; nor
Heaven itself, whose beautiful bright stars
Rule and adorn the world; can ever make
The least division between thee and me,—
Since now I find a refuge in thy favour.

SCENE III.—*The* DEMON *tempts* JUSTINA (*who is a Christian*).

DEMON.

Abyss of Hell! I call on thee,
Thou wild misrule of thine own anarchy!
From thy prison-house set free
The spirits of voluptuous death,
That with their mighty breath
They may destroy a world of virgin thoughts:
Let her chaste mind with fancies thick as motes
Be peopled from thy shadowy deep,
Till her guiltless fantasy
Full to overflowing be!
And, with sweetest harmony,
Let birds and flowers and leaves and all things move
To love, only to love!
Let nothing meet her eyes
But signs of Love's soft victories;
Let nothing meet her ear
But sounds of Love's sweet sorrow;
So that from faith no succour may she borrow,—
But, guided by my spirit blind,
And in a magic snare entwined,
She may now seek Cyprian.
Begin! while I in silence bind
My voice, when thy sweet song thou hast began.

A VOICE WITHIN.

What is the glory far above
All else in human life?

&

All. Love! love!

[*While these words are sung, the* DEMON *goes out at one door, and* JUSTINA *enters at another.*

THE FIRST VOICE.

There is no form in which the fire
Of love its traces has impressed not.
Man lives far more in love's desire
Than by life's breath, soon possessed not.
If all that lives must love or die,
All shapes on earth or sea or sky
With one consent to Heaven cry
That the glory far above
All else in life is—
All. Love! oh love!

JUSTINA.

Thou melancholy thought, which art
So flattering and so sweet, to thee
When did I give the liberty
Thus to afflict my heart?
What is the cause of this new power
Which doth my fevered being move,
Momently raging more and more?
What subtle pain is kindled now,
Which from my heart doth overflow
Into my senses?
All. Love! oh love!

JUSTINA.

'Tis that enamoured nightingale
Who gives me the reply:
He ever tells the same soft tale
Of passion and of constancy
To his mate, who, rapt and fond,
Listening sits, a bough beyond.
Be silent, Nightingale!—No more
Make me think—in hearing thee
Thus tenderly thy love deplore—
If a bird can feel his so,
What a man would feel for me!
And, voluptuous vine, O thou
Who seekest most when least pursuing,—
To the trunk thou interlacest

Art the verdure which embracest,
And the weight which is its ruin,—
No more, with green embraces, vine,
Make me think on what thou lovest!
For, whilst thus thy boughs entwine,
I fear lest thou shouldst teach me, sophist,
How arms might be entangled too.
Light-enchanted sunflower, thou
Who gazest ever true and tender
On the sun's revolving splendour,
Follow not his faithless glance
With thy faded countenance,—
Nor teach my beating heart to fear,
If leaves can mourn without a tear,
How eyes must weep! O nightingale,
Cease from thy enamoured tale,—
Leafy vine, unwreath thy bower,
Restless sunflower, cease to move,—
Or tell me all what poisonous power
Ye use against me.

All. Love! love! love!

Justina. It cannot be! Whom have I ever loved?
Trophies of my oblivion and disdain,
Floro and Lelio did I not reject?
And Cyprian?— [*She becomes troubled at the name of* CYPRIAN.
Did I not requite him
With such severity that he has fled
Where none has ever heard of him again?—
Alas! I now begin to fear that this
May be the occasion whence desire grows bold,—
As if there were no danger. From the moment
That I pronounced to my own listening heart
"Cyprian is absent," O me miserable!
I know not what I feel! [*More calmly.*
It must be pity
To think that such a man, whom all the world
Admired, should be forgot by all the world,
And I the cause. [*She again becomes troubled.*
And yet, if it were pity,
Floro and Lelio might have equal share,
For they are both imprisoned for my sake. [*Calmly.*
Alas! what reasonings are these? It is

Enough I pity him, and that in vain,
Without this ceremonious subtlety.
Woe is me! I know not where to find him now,
Even should I seek him through this wide world!

Enter DEMON.

Demon. Follow, and I will lead thee where he is.
Justina. And who art thou who hast found entrance hither
Into my chamber, through the doors and locks?
Art thou a monstrous shadow which my madness
Has formed in the idle air?
Demon. No. I am one
Called, by the thought which tyrannizes thee,
From his eternal dwelling; who this day
Is pledged to bear thee unto Cyprian.
Justina. So shall thy promise fail. This agony
Of passion which afflicts my heart and soul
May sweep imagination in its storm;
The will is firm.
Demon. Already half is done
In the imagination of an act.
The sin incurred, the pleasure then remains;
Let not the will stop halfway on the road!
Justina. I will not be discouraged, nor despair,
Although I thought it, and although 'tis true
That thought is but a prelude to the deed:—
Thought is not in my power, but action is.
I will not move my foot to follow thee.
Demon. But a far mightier wisdom than thine own
Exerts itself within thee, with such power
Compelling thee to that which it inclines
That it shall force thy step; how wilt thou then
Resist, Justina?
Justina. By my free-will.
Demon. I
Must force thy will.
Justina. It is invincible;
It were not free if thou hadst power upon it.
[*He draws, but cannot move her.*
Demon. Come where a pleasure waits thee.
Justina. It were bought
Too dear.

Demon. 'Twill soothe thy heart to softest peace.
Justina. 'Tis dread captivity.
Demon. 'Tis joy, 'tis glory.
Justina. 'Tis shame, 'tis torment, 'tis despair.
Demon. But how
Canst thou defend thyself from that or me,
If my power drags thee onward?
Justina. My defence
Consists in God!

[*He vainly endeavours to force her, and at last releases her.*

Demon. Woman, thou hast subdued me,
Only by not owning thyself subdued.
But, since thou thus findest defence in God,
I will assume a feigned form, and thus
Make thee a victim of my baffled rage.
For I will mask a spirit in thy form
Who will betray thy name to infamy,
And doubly shall I triumph in thy loss,—
First by dishonouring thee, and then by turning
False pleasure to true ignominy. [*Exit.*
Justina. I
Appeal to Heaven against thee! so that Heaven
May scatter thy delusions, and the blot
Upon my fame vanish in idle thought,
Even as flame dies in the envious air,
And as the floweret wanes at morning frost!
And thou shouldst never——But, alas! to whom
Do I still speak?—Did not a man but now
Stand here before me?—No, I am alone, . . .
And yet I saw him! Is he gone so quickly?
Or can the heated mind engender shapes
From its own fear? Some terrible and strange
Peril is near. Lisander! father! lord!
Livia!

Enter LISANDER *and* LIVIA.

Lisander. Oh my daughter! what?
Livia. What?
Justina. Saw you
A man go forth from my apartment now?—
I scarce sustain myself!
Lisander. A man here?

Justina. Have you not seen him?
Livia. No, lady.
Justina. I saw him.
Lisander. 'Tis impossible; the doors
Which led to this apartment were all locked.
Livia (*aside*). I dare say it was Moscon whom she saw,
For he was locked up in my room.
Lisander. It must
Have been some image of thy fantasy.
Such melancholy as thou feedest is
Skilful in forming such in the vain air
Out of the motes and atoms of the day.
Livia. My master's in the right.
Justina. Oh would it were
Delusion! but I fear some greater ill.
I feel as if out of my bleeding bosom
My heart was torn in fragments; ay,
Some mortal spell is wrought against my frame;
So potent was the charm that, had not God
Shielded my humble innocence from wrong,
I should have sought my sorrow and my shame
With willing steps.—Livia, quick, bring my cloak,
For I must seek refuge from these extremes
Even in the temple of the highest God
Where secretly the faithful worship.
Livia. Here.
Justina (*putting on her cloak*). In this, as in a shroud of snow, may I
Quench the consuming fire in which I burn,
Wasting away!
Lisander. And I will go with thee.
Livia (*aside*). When I once see them safe out of the house,
I shall breathe freely!
Justina. So do I confide
In thy just favour, Heaven!
Lisander. Let us go.
Justina. Thine is the cause, great God! Turn, for my sake
And for thine own, mercifully to me!

1822.

SCENES FROM THE FAUST OF GOETHE.

PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN.

The LORD *and the Host of Heaven.*

Enter Three Archangels.

RAPHAEL.

THE sun makes music as of old
Amid the rival spheres of Heaven,
On its predestined circle rolled
With thunder speed: the Angels even
Draw strength from gazing on its glance,
Though none its meaning fathom may;—
The world's unwithered countenance
Is bright as at creation's day.

GABRIEL.

And swift and swift, with rapid lightness,
The adornèd Earth spins silently,
Alternating elysian brightness
With deep and dreadful night; the sea
Foams in broad billows from the deep
Up to the rocks; and rocks and ocean
Onward, with spheres which never sleep,
Are hurried in eternal motion.

MICHAEL.

And tempests in contention roar
From land to sea, from sea to land;
And, raging, weave a chain of power
Which girds the earth as with a band.
A flashing desolation there
Flames before the thunder's way;
But thy servants, Lord, revere
The gentle changes of thy day.

CHORUS OF THE THREE.

The Angels draw strength from thy glance,
Though no one comprehend thee may:—
Thy world's unwithered countenance
Is bright as on creation's day.

Enter MEPHISTOPHELES.

Mephistopheles. As thou, O Lord, once more art kind enough

To interest thyself in our affairs,
And ask "How goes it with you there below?"
And as indulgently at other times
Thou tookest not my visits in ill part,
Thou seest me here once more among thy household.
Though I should scandalize this company,
You will excuse me if I do not talk
In the high style which they think fashionable;
My pathos certainly would make you laugh too,
Had you not long since given over laughing.
Nothing know I to say of suns and worlds;
I observe only how men plague themselves.
The little god o' the world keeps the same stamp,
As wonderful as on creation's day:—
A little better would he live hadst thou
Not given him a glimpse of heaven's light,
Which he calls reason, and employs it only
To live more beastlily than any beast.
With reverence to your Lordship be it spoken,
He's like one of those long-legged grasshoppers
Who flits and jumps about, and sings for ever
The same old song i' the grass. There let him lie,
Burying his nose in every heap of dung.

The Lord. Have you no more to say? Do you come here
Always to scold, and cavil, and complain?
Seems nothing ever right to you on earth?

Mephistopheles. No, Lord; I find all there, as ever, bad at best.
Even I am sorry for man's days of sorrow;
I could myself almost give up the pleasure
Of plaguing the poor things.

The Lord. Knowest thou Faust?

Mephistopheles. The Doctor?

The Lord. Ay; my servant Faust.

Mephistopheles. In truth
He serves you in a fashion quite his own,
And the fool's meat and drink are not of earth.
His aspirations bear him on so far
That he is half aware of his own folly,
For he demands from heaven its fairest star,
And from the earth the highest joy it bears;
Yet all things far, and all things near, are vain
To calm the deep emotions of his breast.

The Lord. Though he now serves me in a cloud of error,
I will soon lead him forth to the clear day.
When trees look green, full well the gardener knows
That fruits and blooms will deck the coming year.
Mephistopheles. What will you bet?—now I am sure of winning—
Only observe you give me full permission
To lead him softly on my path.
The Lord. As long
As he shall live upon the earth, so long
Is nothing unto thee forbidden.—Man
Must err till he has ceased to struggle.
Mephistopheles. Thanks.
And that is all I ask; for willingly
I never make acquaintance with the dead.
The full fresh cheeks of youth are food for me;
And, if a corpse knocks, I am not at home.
For I am like a cat—I like to play
A little with the mouse before I eat it.
The Lord. Well, well, it is permitted thee. Draw thou
His spirit from its springs; as thou find'st power,
Seize him and lead him on thy downward path;
And stand ashamed when failure teaches thee
That a good man, even in his darkest longings,
Is well aware of the right way.
Mephistopheles. Well and good!
I am not in much doubt about my bet;
And, if I lose, then 'tis your turn to crow,—
Enjoy your triumph then with a full breast.
Ay; dust shall he devour, and that with pleasure,
Like my old paramour, the famous snake.
The Lord. Pray come here when it suits you; for I never
Had much dislike for people of your sort,
And, among all the Spirits who rebelled,
The knave was ever the least tedious to me.
The active spirit of man soon sleeps, and soon
He seeks unbroken quiet; therefore I
Have given him the Devil for a companion,
Who may provoke him to some sort of work,
And must create for ever.—But ye, pure
Children of God, enjoy eternal beauty—
Let that which ever operates and lives

Clasp you within the limits of its love;
And seize with sweet and melancholy thoughts
The floating phantoms of its loveliness.
[*Heaven closes; the Archangels exeunt.*
Mephistopheles. From time to time I visit the old fellow,
And I take care to keep on good terms with him.
Civil enough is this same God Almighty,
To talk so freely with the Devil himself.

SCENE.—*May-Day Night.—The Hartz Mountain, a desolate Country.*

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

Mephistopheles. Would you not like a broomstick? As for me,
I wish I had a good stout ram to ride;
For we are still far from the appointed place.
Faust. This knotted staff is help enough for me,
Whilst I feel fresh upon my legs. What good
Is there in making short a pleasant way?
To creep along the labyrinths of the vales,
And climb those rocks where ever-babbling springs
Precipitate themselves in waterfalls,
Is the true sport that seasons such a path.
Already Spring kindles the birchen spray,
And the hoar pines already feel her breath:
Shall she not work also within our limbs?
Mephistopheles. Nothing of such an influence do I feel.
My body is all wintry, and I wish
The flowers upon our path were frost and snow.
But see how melancholy rises now,
Dimly uplifting her belated beam,
The blank unwelcome round of the red moon,
And gives so bad a light that every step
One stumbles 'gainst some crag. With your permission,
I'll call an Ignis-fatuus to our aid:
I see one yonder burning jollily.—
Halloo, my friend! may I request that you
Would favour us with your bright company?
Why should you blaze away there to no purpose?
Pray be so good as light us up this way.
Ignis-fatuus. With reverence be it spoken, I will try
To overcome the lightness of my nature;
Our course, you know, is generally zig-zag.

Mephistopheles. Ha, ha! your worship thinks you have to deal
With men. Go straight on in the Devil's name,
Or I shall puff your flickering life out.
Ignis-fatuus. Well,
I see you are the master of the house;
I will accommodate myself to you.
Only consider that to-night this mountain
Is all enchanted; and, if Jack-a-lantern
Shows you *his* way, though you should miss your own,
You ought not to be too exact with him.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, *and* IGNIS-FATUUS, *in alternate Chorus.*

The limits of the sphere of dream,
The bounds of true and false, are past.
Lead us on, thou wandering Gleam,
Lead us onward far and fast,
To the wide, the desert waste.

But see, how swift advance and shift
Trees behind trees, row by row,—
How, clift by clift, rocks bend and lift
Their frowning foreheads as we go.
The giant-snouted crags, ho! ho!
How they snort, and how they blow!

Through the mossy sods and stones
Stream and streamlet hurry down,
A rushing throng! A sound of song
Beneath the vault of heaven is blown!
Sweet notes of love, the speaking tones
Of this bright day, sent down to say
That paradise on earth is known,
Resound around, beneath, above.
All we hope and all we love
Finds a voice in this blithe strain,
Which wakens hill and wood and rill,
And vibrates far o'er field and vale,
And which Echo, like the tale
Of old times, repeats again.

To-whoo! to-whoo! near, nearer now
The sound of song, the rushing throng!
Are the screech, the lapwing, and the jay,
All awake as if 'twere day!

See, with long legs and belly wide,
A sâlamander in the brake!
Every root is like a snake,
And along the loose hill-side,
With strange contortions through the night,
Curls, to seize or to affright;
And animated, strong, and many,
They dart forth polypus antennæ,
To blister with their poison spume
The wanderer. Through the dazzling gloom
The many-coloured mice that thread
The dewy turf beneath our tread
In troops each other's motions cross,
Through the heath and through the moss;
And, in legions intertangled,
The fireflies flit and swarm and throng,
Till all the mountain depths are spangled.

Tell me, shall we go or stay?
Shall we onward? Come along!
Everything around is swept
Forward, onward, far away!
Trees and masses intercept
The sight, and wisps on every side
Are puffed up and multiplied.

Mephistopheles. Now vigorously seize my skirt, and gain
This pinnacle of isolated crag.
One may observe with wonder from this point
How Mammon glows among the mountains.
Faust. Ay—
And strangely through the solid depth below
A melancholy light, like the red dawn,
Shoots from the lowest gorge of the abyss
Of mountains, lightening hitherward. There rise
Pillars of smoke; here clouds float gently by;
Here the light burns soft as the enkindled air,
Or the illumined dust of golden flowers;
And now it glides like tender colours spreading,
And now bursts forth in fountains from the earth;
And now it winds, one torrent of broad light,
Through the far valley with a hundred veins;
And now once more within that narrow corner

Masses itself into intensest splendour.
And near us, see! sparks spring out of the ground,
Like golden sand scattered upon the darkness;
The pinnacles of that black wall of mountains
That hems us in are kindled.
Mephistopheles. Rare, in faith!
Does not Sir Mammon gloriously illuminate
His palace for this festival? It is
A pleasure which you had not known before,
I spy the boisterous guests already.
Faust. How
The children of the wind rage in the air!
With what fierce strokes they fall upon my neck!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Cling tightly to the old ribs of the crag.
Beware! for, if with them thou warrest
In their fierce flight towards the wilderness,
Their breath will sweep thee into dust, and drag
Thy body to a grave in the abyss.
A cloud thickens the night.
Hark how the tempest crashes through the forest!
The owls fly out in strange affright;
The columns of the evergreen palaces
Are split and shattered;
The roots creak, and stretch and groan;
And, ruinously overthrown,
The trunks are crushed and scattered
By the fierce blast's unconquerable stress.
Over each other crack and crash they all
In terrible and intertangled fall;
And through the ruins of the shaken mountain
The airs hiss and howl—
It is not the voice of the fountain,
Nor the wolf in his midnight prowl.
Dost thou not hear?
Strange accents are ringing
Aloft, afar, anear;
The witches are singing!
The torrent of a raging wizard song
Streams the whole mountain along.

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

The stubble is yellow, the corn is green,

Now to the Brocken the witches go;
The mighty multitude here may be seen,
Gathering, wizard and witch, below.
Sir Urian is sitting aloft in the air.
Hey over stock! and hey over stone!
'Twixt witches and incubi what shall be done?
Tell it who dare! tell it who dare!

A VOICE.

Upon a sow-swine whose farrows were nine
Old Baubo rideth alone.

CHORUS.

Honour her to whom honour is due!
Old mother Baubo, honour to you!
An able sow with old Baubo upon her
Is worthy of glory and worthy of honour!
The legion of witches is coming behind,
Darkening the night and outspeeding the wind!

A VOICE.

Which way comest thou?

A VOICE.

Over Ilsenstein.
The owl was awake in the white moonshine;
I saw her at rest in her downy nest,
And she stared at me with her broad bright eyne.

VOICES.

And you may now as well take your course on to hell,
Since you ride by so fast on the headlong blast.

A VOICE.

She dropped poison upon me as I passed:
Here are the wounds—

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

Come away! come along!
The way is wide, the way is long,
But what is that for a Bedlam throng?
Stick with the prong, and scratch with the broom!
The child in the cradle lies strangled at home,
And the mother is clapping her hands!

SEMICHORUS OF WIZARDS I.

We glide in
Like snails, when the women are all away;
And from a house once given over to sin
Woman has a thousand steps to stray.

SEMICHORUS II.

A thousand steps must a woman take,
Where a man but a single spring will make.

VOICES ABOVE.

Come with us, come with us, from Felsensee!

VOICES BELOW.

With what joy would we fly through the upper sky!
We are washed, we are 'nointed, stark naked are we:
But our toil and our pain are for ever in vain.

BOTH CHORUSES.

The wind is still, the stars are fled,
The melancholy moon is dead;
The magic notes, like spark on spark,
Drizzle, whistling through the dark.
Come away!

VOICES BELOW.

Stay, oh stay!

VOICES ABOVE.

Out of the crannies of the rocks
Who calls?

VOICES BELOW.

Oh let me join your flocks!
I three hundred years have striven
To catch your skirt, and mount to heaven,—
And still in vain. Oh might I be
With company akin to me!

BOTH CHORUSES.

Some on a ram and some on a prong,
On poles and on broomsticks, we flutter along;
Forlorn is the wight who can rise not to-night.

A HALF-WITCH BELOW.

I have been tripping this many an hour:
Are the others already so far before?
No quiet at home, and no peace abroad!
And less methinks is found by the road.

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

Come onward, away! aroint thee, aroint!
A witch to be strong must anoint—anoint—
Then every trough will be boat enough.
With a rag for a sale we can sweep through the sky.
Who flies not to-night, when means he to fly?

BOTH CHORUSES.

We cling to the skirt, and we strike on the ground;

Witch-legions thicken around and around;
Wizard-swarms cover the heath all over. [*They descend.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What thronging, dashing, raging, rustling!
What whispering, babbling, hissing, bustling!
What glimmering, spirting, stinking, burning,
As heaven and earth were overturning!
There is a true witch-element about us;
Take hold on me, or we shall be divided:—
Where are you?

Faust (from a distance). Here!

Mephistopheles. What! . . .
I must exert my authority in the house.
Place for young Voland! Pray make way, good people!—
Take hold on me, doctor, and with one step
Let us escape from this unpleasant crowd:
They are too mad for people of my sort.
Just there shines a peculiar kind of light—
Something attracts me in those bushes.—Come
This way; we shall slip down there in a minute.

Faust. Spirit of Contradiction!—Well, lead on!—
'Twere a wise feat indeed to wander out
Into the Brocken upon May-day night,
And then to isolate oneself in scorn,
Disgusted with the humours of the time!

Mephistopheles. See yonder, round a many-coloured flame,
A merry club is huddled all together:
Even with such little people as sit there
One would not be alone.

Faust. Would that *I* were
Up yonder in the glow and whirling smoke
Where the blind million rush impetuously
To meet the evil ones; there might I solve
Many a riddle that torments me!

Mephistopheles. Yet
Many a riddle there is tied anew
Inextricably. Let the great world rage!
We will stay here safe in the quiet dwellings.
'Tis an old custom: men have ever built
Their own small world in the great world of all.
I see young witches naked there, and old ones

Wisely attired with greater decency.
Be guided now by me, and you shall buy
A pound of pleasure with a dram of trouble.
I hear them tune their instruments—one must
Get used to this damned scraping. Come, I'll lead you
Among them; and what there you do and see
As a fresh compact 'twixt us two shall be.—
How say you now? this space is wide enough:
Look forth, you cannot see the end of it.
An hundred bonfires burn in rows, and they
Who throng around them seem innumerable:
Dancing and drinking, jabbering, making love,
And cooking, are at work. Now tell me, friend,
What is there better in the world than this?

Faust. In introducing us, do you assume
The character of wizard or of devil?

Mephistopheles. In truth, I generally go about
In strict incognito; and yet one likes
To wear one's orders upon gala days.
I have no ribbon at my knee; but here
At home the cloven foot is honourable.
See you that snail there?—she comes creeping up,
And with her feeling eyes hath smelt out something:
I could not, if I would, mask myself here.
Come now, we'll go about from fire to fire:
I'll be the pimp, and you shall be the lover.

[*To some Old Women, who are sitting round a heap of glimmering coals.*]

Old gentlewomen, what do you do out here?
You ought to be with the young rioters
Right in the thickest of the revelry—
But every one is best content at home.

GENERAL.

Who dare confide in right or a just claim?
So much as I had done for them?—and now—
With women and the people 'tis the same,
Youth will stand foremost ever,—age may go
To the dark grave unhonoured.

MINISTER.

Now-a-days
People assert their rights; they go too far;
But, as for me, the good old times I praise.

Then we were all in all; 'twas something worth
One's while to be in place and wear a star;
That was indeed the golden age on earth.

PARVENU.

We too are active, and we did and do
What we ought not perhaps; and yet we now
Will seize, whilst all things are whirled round and round,
A spoke of Fortune's wheel, and keep our ground.

AUTHOR.

Who now can taste a treatise of deep sense
And ponderous volume? 'Tis impertinence
To write what none will read, therefore will I
To please the young and thoughtless people try.

Mephistopheles. (*Who at once appears to have grown very old.*)—
I find the people ripe for the last day,
Since I last came up to the wizard mountain;
And, as my little cask runs turbid now,
So is the world drained to the dregs.

Pedlar-witch. Look here,
Gentlemen; do not hurry on so fast,
And lose the chance of a good pennyworth.
I have a pack full of the choicest wares
Of every sort, and yet in all my bundle
Is nothing like what may be found on earth;
Nothing that in a moment will make rich
Men and the world with fine malicious mischief.
There is no dagger drunk with blood; no bowl
From which consuming poison may be drained
By innocent and healthy lips; no jewel,
The price of an abandoned maiden's shame;
No sword which cuts the bond it cannot loose,
Or stabs the wearer's enemy in the back;
No——

Mephistopheles. Gossip, you know little of these times.
What has been has been; what is done is past.
They shape themselves into the innovations
They breed, and innovation drags us with it.
The torrent of the crowd sweeps over us:
You think to impel, and are yourself impelled.

Faust. Who is that yonder?

Mephistopheles. Mark her well. It is
Lilith.

Faust. Who?

Mephistopheles. Lilith, the first wife of Adam.
Beware of her fair hair, for she excels
All women in the magic of her locks;
And, when she winds them round a young man's neck,
She will not ever set him free again.

FAUST.

There sit a girl and an old woman—they
Seem to be tired with pleasure and with play.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

There is no rest to-night for any one:
When one dance ends another is begun;
Come, let us to it. We shall have rare fun.

[FAUST *dances and sings with a Girl, and* MEPHISTOPHELES *with an Old Woman.*]

Procto-Phantasmist. What is this cursèd multitude about?
Have we not long since proved to demonstration
That ghosts move not on ordinary feet?
But these are dancing just like men and women.

The Girl. What does he want then at our ball?

Faust. Oh! he
Is far above us all in his conceit.
Whilst we enjoy, he reasons of enjoyment;
And any step which in our dance we tread,
If it be left out of his reckoning,
Is not to be considered as a step.
There are few things that scandalize him not;
And, when you whirl round in the circle now,
As he went round the wheel in his old mill,
He says that you go wrong in all respects,—
Especially if you congratulate him
Upon the strength of the resemblance.

Procto-phantasmist. Fly!
Vanish!—Unheard-of impudence! What, still there!
In this enlightened age too, since you have been
Proved not to exist!—But this infernal brood
Will hear no reason and endure no rule.
Are we so wise, and is the pond still haunted?
How long have I been sweeping out this rubbish
Of superstition, and the world will not

Come clean with all my pains!—it is a case
Unheard of!
The Girl. Then leave off teazing us so.
Procto-phantasmist. I tell you, spirits, to your faces now,
That I should not regret this despotism
Of spirits, but that mine can wield it not.
To-night I shall make poor work of it;
Yet I will take a round with you, and hope
Before my last step in the living dance
To beat the poet and the devil together.
Mephistopheles. At last he will sit down in some foul puddle;
That is his way of solacing himself;—
Until some leech, diverted with his gravity,
Cures him of spirits and the spirit together.
[*To* FAUST, *who has seceded from the dance.*]
Why do you let that fair girl pass from you
Who sang so sweetly to you in the dance?
Faust. A red mouse in the middle of her singing
Sprang from her mouth.
Mephistopheles. That was all right, my friend:
Be it enough that the mouse was not grey.
Do not disturb your hour of happiness
With close consideration of such trifles.
Faust. Then saw I—
Mephistopheles. What?
Faust. Seest thou not a pale
Fair girl, standing alone, far, far away?
She drags herself now forward with slow steps,
And seems as if she moved with shackled feet:
I cannot overcome the thought that she
Is like poor Margaret.
Mephistopheles. Let it be—pass on—
No good can come of it—it is not well
To meet it. It is an enchanted phantom,
A lifeless idol; with its numbing look
It freezes up the blood of man; and they
Who meet its ghastly stare are turned to stone,
Like those who saw Medusa.
Faust. Oh too true!
Her eyes are like the eyes of a fresh corpse
Which no beloved hand has closed. Alas!
That is the breast which Margaret yielded to me—

Those are the lovely limbs which I ejnoyed.
Mephistopheles. It is all magic, poor deluded fool!
She looks to every one like his first love.
Faust. Oh what delight! what woe! I cannot turn
My looks from her sweet piteous countenance.
How strangely does a single bloodred line,
Not broader than the sharp edge of a knife,
Adorn her lovely neck!
Mephistopheles. Ay, she can carry
Her head under her arm upon occasion;
Perseus has cut it off for her. These pleasures
End in delusion.—Gain this rising ground;
It is as airy here as in a . . . ;
And if I am not mightily deceived,
I see a theatre.—What may this mean?
Attendant. Quite a new piece, the last of seven, for 'tis
The custom now to represent that number.
'Tis written by a dilettante, and
The actors who perform are dilettanti.
Excuse me, gentlemen, but I must vanish:
I am a dilettante curtain-lifter.

1822.

SHELLEY'S NOTES TO THE TRANSLATIONS.

P. 439.

Strophe.

The Antistrophe is omitted.

P. 448.

Of axes, for Ætnean slaughterings.

I confess I do not understand this.

P. 482.

Is bright as on creation's day.

RAPHAEL.

The sun sounds, according to ancient custom,
In the song of emulation of his brother spheres,
And its fore-written circle
Fulfils with a step of thunder.
Its countenance gives the Angels strength,
Though no one can fathom it.
The incredible high works
Are excellent as at the first day.

GABRIEL.

And swift, and inconceivably swift,
The adornment of earth winds itself round,
And exchanges paradise-clearness
With deep dreadful night.
The sea foams in broad waves
From its deep bottom up to the rocks;
And rocks and sea are torn on together
In the eternal swift course of the spheres.

MICHAEL.

And storms roar in emulation
From sea to land, from land to sea,
And make, raging, a chain
Of deepest operation round about.
There flames a flashing destruction
Before the path of the thunderbolt,
But thy servants, Lord, revere
The gentle alternations of thy day.

CHORUS.

Thy countenance gives the Angels strength,
Though none can comprehend thee:
And all thy lofty works
Are excellent as at the first day.

Such is a literal translation of this astonishing Chorus. It is impossible to represent in another language the melody of the versification; even the volatile strength and delicacy of the ideas escape in the crucible of translation, and the reader is surprised to find a caput mortuum.

APPENDIX.

VERSES ON A CAT.

I.

A CAT in distress,
Nothing more, nothing less :—
Good folks, I must faithfully tell ye,
As I am a sinner,
It waits for some dinner
To stuff out its own little belly.

II.

You would not easily guess
All the modes of distress
Which torture the tenants of earth,
And the various evils
Which, like so many devils,
Attend the poor souls from their birth.

III.

Some a living require,
And others desire
An old fellow out of the way :
And which is the best
I leave to be guessed,
For I cannot pretend to say.

IV.

One wants society,—
Another, variety,—

Others, a tranquil life;
Some want food;
Others, as good,
Only want a wife.

V.

But this poor little cat
Only wanted a rat
To stuff out its own little maw:
And it were as good
Some people had such food
To make them "hold their jaw."

FRAGMENT.

HARK! the owlet flaps his wings
In the pathless dell beneath!
Hark! 'tis the night-raven sings
Tidings of approaching death!

1807.

LATIN VERSES:

THE EPITAPH IN GRAY'S ELEGY.

I.

HIC sinu fessum caput hospitali
Cespitis dormit juvenis; nec illi
Fata ridebant, popularis ille
Nescius auræ.

II.

Musa non vultu genus arroganti
Rusticâ natum grege despicata;
Et suum tristis puerum notavit
Sollicitudo.

III.

Indoles illi bene larga; pectus
Veritas sedem sibi vindicavit:
Et pari tantis meritis beavit
Munere cœlum.

IV.

Omne quod mœstis habuit miserto
Corde largivit, lacrymam: recepit
Omne quod cœlo voluit, fidelis
Pectus amici.

V.

Longius sed tu fuge curiosus
Cæteras laudes fuge suspicari;
Cæteras culpas fuge velle tractas
Sede tremendâ.

VI.

Spe tremescentes recubant in illâ
Sede virtutes pariterque culpæ,
In sui Patris gremio, tremendâ
Sede Deique.

1808.

LATIN VERSES:

IN HOROLOGIUM.

Inter marmoreas Leonoræ pendula colles
Fortunata nimis machina dicit horas.
Quas manibus premit illa duas insensa papillas
Cur mihi sit digito tangere, amata, nefas?

1808.

VICTORIA.

I.

'Twas dead of the night when I sat in my dwelling;
One glimmering lamp was expiring and low;
Around, the dark tide of the tempest was swelling;
Along the wild mountains night-ravens were yelling—
They bodingly presaged destruction and woe.

II.

'Twas then that I started! The wild storm was howling;
Nought was seen save the lightning that danced in the sky;

Above me the crash of the thunder was rolling;
And low chilling murmurs the blast wafted by.

III.

My heart sank within me;—unheeded the war
Of the battling clouds on the mountain-tops broke;
Unheeded the thunder-peal crashed in mine ear.
This heart, hard as iron, is stranger to fear:
But conscience in low noiseless whispering spoke.

IV.

'Twas then that, her form on the whirlwind upholding,
The ghost of the murdered Victoria strode:
In her right hand a shadowy shroud she was holding:
She swiftly advanced to my lonesome abode.

V.

I wildly then called on the tempest to hear me

. . . . .

1808.

SISTER ROSA.

I.

The death-bell beats!—the mountain repeats
The echoing sound of the knell:
And the dark Monk now wraps the cowl round his brow,
As he sits in his lonely cell.

II.

And the cold hand of Death chills his shuddering breath
As he lists to the fearful lay
Which the ghosts of the sky, as they sweep wildly by,
Sing to departed day;
And they sing of the hour when the stern Fates had power
To resolve Rosa's form to its clay.

III.

But that hour is past: and that hour was the last
Of peace to the dark Monk's brain.
Bitter tears from his eyes gushed silent and fast,
And he strove to suppress them in vain.

IV.

Then his fair cross of gold he dashed on the floor
When the death-knell struck on his ear.
"Delight is in store for her evermore—
But, for me, is fate, horror, and fear!"

V.

Then his eyes wildly rolled when the death-bell tolled,
And he raged in terrific woe,
And he stamped on the ground; but, when ceased the sound,
Tears again began to flow.

VI.

And the ice of despair chilled the wild throb of care;
And he sate in mute agony still,
Till the night-stars shone through the cloudless air,
And the pale moonbeam slept on the hill.

VII.

Then he knelt in his cell, and the horrors of hell
Were delights, to his agonized pain;
And he prayed to God to dissolve the spell
Which else must for ever remain.

VIII.

And in fervent prayer he knelt on the ground,
Till the abbey-bell struck one.
His feverish blood ran chill at the sound;
And a voice—hollow, horrible—murmured around
"The term of thy penance is done!"

IX.

Grew dark the night—the moonbeam bright
Waxed faint on the mountain high;
And from the black hill went a voice cold and still:
"Monk, thou art free to die!"

X.

Then he rose on his feet, and his heart loud did beat,
And his limbs they were palsied with dread;
Whilst the grave's clammy dew o'er his pale forehead grew,
And he shuddered to sleep with the dead."

XI.

And the wild midnight storm raved around his tall form,
As he sought the chapel's gloom;
And the sunk grass did sigh to the wind bleak and high
As he searched for the new-made tomb.

XII.

And the forms dark and high seemed around him to fly,
And mingle their yells with the blast;
And on the dark wall half-seen shadows did fall
As enhorrored he onward passed.

XIII.

And the storm-fiends wild rave o'er the new-made grave,
And dread shadows linger around.
The Monk called on God his soul to save,
And in horror sank on the ground.

XIV.

Then despair nerved his arm to dispel the charm,
And he burst Rosa's coffin asunder;
And the fierce storm did swell more terrific and fell,
And louder pealed the thunder.

XV.

And laughed in joy the fiendish throng,
Mixed with ghosts of the mouldering dead;
And their grisly wings as they floated along
Whistled in murmurs dread.

XVI.

And her skeleton form the dead Nun reared,
Which dropped with the chill dew of hell;
In her half-eaten eyeballs two pale flames appeared,
And triumphant their gleam on the dark Monk glared
As he stood within the cell.

XVII.

And her lank hand lay on his shuddering brain,
But each power was nerved by fear.
"I never henceforth may breathe again:
Death now ends mine anguished pain:
The grave yawns—we meet there."

XVIII.

And her skeleton lungs did utter the sound,
So deadly, so lone, and so fell,
That in long vibrations shuddered the ground:
And, as the stern notes floated around,
A deep groan was answered from Hell.

1808.

THE LAKE-STORM.

AH! faint are her limbs, and her footstep is weary,
Yet far must the desolate wanderer roam:
Though the tempest is stern, and the mountain is dreary,
She must quit at deep midnight her pitiless home.
I see her swift foot dash the dew from the whortle,
As she rapidly hastes to the green grove of myrtle;
And I hear, as she wraps round her figure the kirtle:
"Stay thy boat on the lake: dearest Henry, I come!"

High swelled in her bosom the throb of affection,
As lightly her form bounded over the lea,
And arose in her mind every dear recollection:—
"I come, dearest Henry, and wait but for thee!"
How sad, when dear hope every sorrow is soothing,
When sympathy's swell the soft bosom is moving,
And the mind the mild joys of affection is proving,
Is the stern voice of Fate that bids happiness flee!

Oh! dark loured the clouds on that horrible eve,
And the moon dimly gleamed through the tempested air.
Oh! how could false visions such softness deceive?
Oh! how could false hope rend a bosom so fair?
Thy love's pallid corse the wild surges are laving;
O'er his form the fierce swell of the tempest is raving.
But fear not, parting spirit! Thy goodness is saving
In eternity's bowers a seat for thee there.

1808.

BEREAVEMENT.

How stern are the woes of the desolate mourner
As he bends in still grief o'er the hallowèd bier,
As enanguished he turns from the laugh of the scorner,
And drops to perfection's remembrance a tear;
When floods of despair down his pale cheeks are streaming,
When no blissful hope on his bosom is beaming,
Or, if lulled for awhile, soon he starts from his dreaming,
And finds torn the soft ties to affection so dear.

Ah! when shall day dawn on the night of the grave,
Or summer succeed to the winter of death?
Rest awhile, hapless victim! and Heaven will save
The spirit that faded away with the breath.
Eternity points, in its amaranth bower
Where no clouds of fate o'er the sweet prospect lour,
Unspeakable pleasure, of goodness the dower,
When woe fades away like the mist of the heath.

1808.

FADING.

See yon opening rose
Spreads its fragrance to the gale:
It fades within an hour;
Its decay is fast—is pale.
Paler is yon maiden;
Faster is her heart's decay:
Deep with sorrow laden,
She sinks in death away.

1809.

THE WANDERING JEW.

Still like the scathèd pinetree's height,
Braving the tempest of the night,
Have I 'scaped the bickering fire;
Like the shattered pine which a monument stands
Of faded grandeur, which the brands

Of the tempest-shaken air
Have riven on the desolate heath,—
Yet it stands majestic even in death,
And raises its wild form there.

1809.

ST IRVYNE'S TOWER.

I.

How softly through heaven's wide expanse
Bright day's resplendent colours fade!
How sweetly does the moonbeam's glance
With silver tint St Irvyne's glade!

II.

No cloud along the spangled air
Is borne upon the evening breeze.
How solemn is the scene—how fair
The moonbeams rest upon the trees!

III.

Yon dark grey turret glimmers white;
Upon it sits the mournful owl;
Along the stillness of the night
Her melancholy shriekings roll.

IV.

But not alone on Irvyne's tower
The silver moonbeam pours her ray:
It gleams upon the ivied Bower,
It dances on the cascade's spray.

V.

Ah! why do darkening shades conceal
The hour when man must cease to be?
Why may not human minds unveil
The dim mists of futurity?

VI.

The keenness of the world hath torn
The heart which opens to its blast:
Despised, neglected, and forlorn,
Sinks the wretch in death at last.

1809.

THE FATHER'S SPECTRE.

I.

GHOSTS of the dead! have I not heard your yelling
Rise on the night-rolling breath of the blast,
When o'er the dark ether the tempest is swelling,
And on eddying whirlwind the thunder-peal passed?

II.

For oft have I stood on the dark height of Jura
Which frowns on the valley that opens beneath;
Oft have I braved the chill night-tempest's fury,
Whilst around me, I thought, echoed murmurs of death.

III.

And now, whilst the winds of the mountain are howling,
O father! thy voice seems to strike on mine ear.
In air whilst the tide of the night-storm is rolling,
It breaks on the pause of the elements' jar.

IV.

On the wing of the whirlwind which roars o'er the mountain
Perhaps rides the ghost of my sire who is dead,—
On the mist of the tempest which hangs o'er the fountain,—
Whilst a wreath of dark vapour encircles his head.

1809.

THE SOLITARY.

DAR'ST thou amid the varied multitude
To live alone, an isolated thing?
To see the busy beings round thee spring,
And care for none; in thy calm solitude,
A flower that scarce breathes in the desert rude
To Zephyr's passing wing?

Not the swart Pariah in some Indian grove,
Lone, lean, and hunted by his brothers' hate,
Hath drunk so deep the cup of bitter fate

As that poor wretch who cannot, cannot love:
He bears a load which nothing can remove,
A killing withering weight.

He smiles—'tis sorrow's deadliest mockery;
He speaks—the cold words flow not from his soul;
He acts like others, drains the genial bowl,—
Yet, yet he longs—although he fears—to die;
He pants to reach what yet he seems to fly,
Dull life's extremest goal.

1810.

DEATH:—A DIALOGUE.

. . . . . .

DEATH.

FOR my dagger is bathed in the blood of the brave.
I come, careworn tenant of life, from the grave,
Where innocence sleeps 'neath the peace-giving sod,
And the good cease to tremble at tyranny's nod.
I offer a calm habitation to thee:
Say, victim of grief, wilt thou slumber with me?
My mansion is damp, cold silence is there;
But it lulls in oblivion the fiends of despair.
Not a groan of regret, not a sigh, not a breath,
Dares dispute with grim silence the empire of Death.
I offer a calm habitation to thee:—
Say, victim of grief, wilt thou slumber with me?

MORTAL.

Mine eyelids are heavy, my soul seeks repose,
It longs in thy cells to embosom its woes;
It longs in thy cells to deposit its load,
Where no longer the scorpions of perfidy goad,
Where the phantoms of prejudice vanish away,
And bigotry's bloodhounds lose scent of their prey.
Yet tell me, dark Death—when thine empire is o'er,
What awaits on futurity's mist-covered shore?

DEATH.

Cease, cease, wayward mortal! I dare not unveil
The shadows that float on eternity's vale:

Nought waits for the good but a Spirit of Love
That will hail their blessed advent to regions above:
For Love, mortal, gleams through the gloom of my sway,
And the shades which surround me fly fast at its ray.
Hast thou loved? Then depart from these regions of hate,
And in slumber with me blunt the arrows of Fate.
I offer a calm habitation to thee:—
Say, victim of grief, wilt thou slumber with me?

MORTAL.

Oh sweet is thy slumber! oh sweet is the ray
Which after thy night introduces the day!
How concealed, how persuasive, self-interest's breath,
Though it floats to mine ear from the bosom of Death!
I hoped that I quite was forgotten by all:—
Yet a lingering friend might be grieved at my fall;
And duty forbids, though I languish to die,
When departure might heave virtue's breast with a sigh.
O Death! O my friend! snatch this form to thy shrine,
And I fear, dear destroyer, I shall not repine!

1810.

DEATH VANQUISHED.

DEATH! where is thy victory?—
To triumph whilst I die,—
To triumph whilst thine ebon wing
Enfolds my shuddering soul!
O Death! where is thy sting?
Not when the tides of murder roll,
When nations groan, that kings may bask in bliss.
Death! canst thou boast a victory such as this!
When in his hour of pomp and power
His blow the mightiest murders gave
'Mid Nature's cries, the sacrifice
Of millions to glut the grave,—
When sunk the tyrant desolation's slave,
Or freedom's lifeblood streamed upon thy shrine,—
Stern Tyrant could'st thou boast a victory such as mine?

To know in dissolution's void
That mortals' baubles, sunk, decay,—
That everything but love, destroyed,
Must perish with its kindred clay;
Perish Ambition's crown,
Perish her sceptred sway;
From Death's pale front fade Pride's fastidious frown;
In Death's damp vault the lurid fires decay
That Envy lights at heaven-born Virtue's beam;
That all the cares subside
Which lurk beneath the tide
Of life's unquiet stream;—
Yes! *this* is victory!
And on yon rock whose dark form glooms the sky
To stretch these pale limbs when the soul is fled,—
To baffle the lean Passions of their prey,—
To sleep within the palace of the dead!
Oh! not the king around whose dazzling throne
His countless courtiers mock the words they say
Triumphs amid the buds of glory blown
As I in this cold bed and faint expiring groan!

Tremble, ye proud, whose grandeur mocks the woe
Which props the column of unnatural State!
You the plainings faint and low
From Misery's tortured soul that flow
Shall usher to your fate.
Tremble, ye conquerors, at whose fell command
The War-fiend riots o'er a peaceful land!
You desolation's gory throng
Shall bear from victory along
To that mysterious strand.

Oxford, 1810.

POSTHUMOUS FRAGMENTS OF MARGARET NICHOLSON;

Being Poems found amongst the Papers of that noted Female, who attempted the life of the King in 1786. Edited by John Fitzvictor. [Oxford, Printed and sold by J. Munday, 1810.]

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE energy and native genius of these Fragments must be the only apology which the Editor can make for thus intruding them on the public notice. The first I found with no title, and have left it so. It is intimately connected with the dearest interests of universal happiness; and, much as we may deplore the fatal and enthusiastic tendency which the ideas of this poor female had acquired, we cannot fail to pay the tribute of unequivocal regret to the departed memory of genius which, had it been rightly organized, would have made that intellect, which had since become the victim of frenzy and despair, a most brilliant ornament to society.

In case the sale of these Fragments evinces that the public have any curiosity to be presented with a more copious collection of my unfortunate Aunt's poems, I have other papers in my possession which shall, in that case, be subjected to their notice. It may be supposed they require much arrangement: but I send the following to the press in the same state in which they came into my possession.

J. F.

FRAGMENT,

SUPPOSED TO BE AN EPITHALAMIUM OF FRANCIS RAVAILLAC AND CHARLOTTE CORDAY.

I.

'TIS midnight now. Athwart the murky air
Dank lurid meteors shoot a livid gleam;
From the dark storm-clouds flashes a fearful glare,—
It shows the bending oak, the roaring stream.
I pondered on the woes of lost mankind,
I pondered on the ceaseless rage of kings;
My rapt soul dwelt upon the ties that bind
The mazy volume of commingling things,
When fell and wild misrule to man stern sorrow brings.

II.

I heard a yell! It was not the knell
When the blasts on the wild lake sleep,
That floats on the pause of the summer gale's swell
O'er the breast of the waveless deep.

I thought it had been Death's accents cold
That bade me recline on the shore:
I laid mine hot head on the surge-beaten mould,
And thought to breathe no more.

But a heavenly sleep, that did suddenly steep
In balm my bosom's pain,
Pervaded my soul; and free from control
Did mine intellect range again.

III.

Methought, enthroned upon a silvery cloud,
Which floated 'mid a strange and brilliant light,
My form, upborne by viewless ether, rode,
And spurned the lessening realms of earthly night.
What heavenly notes burst on my ravish'd ears!
What beauteous spirits met my dazzled eye!
Hark! louder swells the music of the spheres —
More clear the forms of speechless bliss float by—
And heavenly gestures suit etherial melody.

But fairer than the spirits of the air,
More graceful than the sylph of symmetry,
Than the enthusiast's fancied love more fair,
Were the bright forms that swept the azure sky.
Enthroned in roseate light, a heavenly band
Strewed flowers of bliss that never fade away;
They welcome virtue to its native land,
And songs of triumph greet the joyous day
When endless bliss the woes of fleeting life repay.

Congenial minds will seek their kindred soul,
E'en though the tide of time has rolled between:
They mock weak matter's impotent control,
And seek of endless life the eternal scene.
At Death's vain summons *this* will never die;
In Nature's chaos *this* will not decay:
These are the bands which closely, warmly, tie
Thy soul, O Charlotte, 'yond this chain of clay
To him who thine must be till time shall fade away.

Yes, Francis! thine was the dear knife that tore
A tyrant's heart-strings from his guilty breast;
Thine was the daring at a tyrant's gore
To smile in triumph, to contemn the rest:—

And thine, loved glory of thy sex! to tear
From its base shrine a despot's haughty soul,
To laugh at sorrow in secure despair,
To mock with smiles life's lingering control,
And triumph 'mid the griefs that round thy fate did roll.

Yes! the fierce spirits of the avenging deep
With endless tortures goad their guilty shades!
I see the lank and ghastly spectres sweep
Along the burning length of yon arcades;
And I see Satan stalk athwart the plain—
He hastes along the burning soil of hell:—
"Welcome, thou despots, to my dark domain!
With maddenir joy mine anguished senses swell
To welcome to their home the friends I love so well!"

. . . . . .

IV.

Hark to those notes! How sweet, how thrilling sweet,
They echo to the sound of angels' feet!

. . . . . .

V.

Oh! haste to the bower where roses are spread,
For there is prepared thy nuptial bed!
Oh! haste! . . Hark, hark! . . They're gone!

VI.

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

Stay, ye days of contentment and joy,
Whilst love every care is erasing!
Stay, ye pleasures that never can cloy,
And ye spirits that can never cease pleasing!

And, if any soft passion be near
Which mortals, frail mortals, can know,
Let love shed on the bosom a tear,
And dissolve the chill icedrop of woe.

VII.

SYMPHONY.

FRANCIS.

Soft, my dearest angel, stay!
Oh! you suck my soul away!
Suck on, suck on! I glow, I glow!
Tides of maddening passion roll,
And streams of rapture drown my soul!

Now give me one more billing kiss—
Let your lips now repeat the bliss!
Endless kisses steal my breath!
No life can equal such a death.

VIII.

CHARLOTTE.

Oh yes! I will kiss thine eyes so fair,
And I will clasp thy form.
Serene is the breath of the balmy air,
But I think, love, thou feelest me warm!
And I will recline on thy marble neck
Till I mingle into thee;
And I will kiss the rose on thy cheek,
And thou shalt give kisses to me;—
For here is no morn to flout our delight,
Oh! dost thou not joy at this?
And here we may lie an endless night,
A long long night of bliss.

IX.

Spirits, when raptures move,
Say what it is to love,
When passion's tear stands on the cheek,
When bursts the unconscious sigh,
And the tremulous lips dare not speak
What is told by the soul-felt eye.
But what is sweeter to Revenge's ear
Than the fell tyrant's last expiring yell?
Yes! than love's sweetest blisses 'tis more dear
To drink the floatings of a despot's knell!

X.

I wake! . . . 'Tis done—'tis o'er!

DESPAIR.

I.

AND canst thou mock mine agony, thus calm
In cloudless radiance, Queen of silver night?

Can you, ye flowerets, spread your perfumed balm
'Mid pearly gems of dew that shine so bright?
And you, wild winds, thus can you sleep so still
Whilst throbs the tempest of my breast so high?
Can the fierce night-fiends rest on yonder hill?
And in the eternal mansions of the sky
Can the directors of the storm in powerless silence lie?

II.

Hark! I hear music on the Zephyr's wing!
Louder it floats along the unruffled sky!
Some fairy sure has touched the viewless string!
Now faint in distant air the murmurs die,—
Awhile it stills the tide of agony.
Now, now, it loftier swells! again stern woe
Arises with the awakening melody:
Again fierce torments, such as demons know,
In bitterer feller tide on this torn bosom flow!

III.

Arise, ye sightless spirits of the storm,
Ye unseen minstrels of the aërial song!
Pour the fierce tide around this lonely form,
And roll the tempest's wildest swell along!
Dart the red lightning, wing the forkèd flash,
Pour from thy cloud-formed hills the thunder's roar,
Arouse the whirlwind, and let ocean dash
In fiercest tumult on the rocking shore!
Destroy this life, or let earth's fabric be no more!

IV.

Yes, every tie that links me here is dead.
Mysterious Fate, thy mandate I obey:
Since hope and peace and joy for aye are fled,
I come, terrific Power, I come away.
Then o'er this ruined soul let spirits of hell,
In triumph laughing wildly, mock its pain;
And, though with direst pangs mine heartstrings swell,
I'll echo back their deadly yells again,
Cursing the Power that ne'er made aught in vain!

FRAGMENT.

I.

YES, all is past! swift time has fled away,
Yet its swell pauses on my sickening mind.
How long will horror nerve this flame of clay?
I'm dead,—and lingers yet my soul behind!
O powerful Fate! revoke thy deadly spell!
And yet that may not ever, ever be,—
Heaven will not smile upon the work of hell:
Ah no! for heaven cannot smile on me:
Fate, envious Fate, has sealed my wayward destiny.

II.

I sought the cold brink of the midnight surge;
I sighed beneath its wave to hide my woes:
The rising tempest sung a funeral dirge,
And on the blast a frightful yell arose.
Wild flew the meteors o'er the maddened main,—
Wilder did grief athwart my bosom glare.
Stilled was the unearthly howling, and a strain
Swelled 'mid the tumult of the battling air:—
'Twas like a spirit's song, but yet more soft and fair.

III.

I met a maniac,—like he was to me.
I said: "Poor victim, wherefore dost thou roam?
And canst thou not contend with agony,
That thus at midnight thou dost quit thine home?"
"Ah! there she sleeps! Cold is her bloodless form,
And I will go to slumber in her grave;
And then our ghosts, whilst raves the maddened storm,
Will sleep at midnight o'er the wildered wave:
Wilt thou our lowly beds with tears of pity lave?"

IV.

"Ah no! I cannot shed the pitying tear:
This breast is cold, this heart can feel no more.
But I can rest me on thy chilling bier,
Can shriek in horror to the tempest's roar."

THE SPECTRAL HORSEMAN.

WHAT was the shriek that struck fancy's ear
As it sate on the ruins of time that is past?
Hark! it floats on the fitful blast of the wind,
And breathes to the pale moon a funeral sigh.
It is not the Benshie's moan on the storm,
Or a shivering fiend that, thirsting for sin,
Seeks murder and guilt when virtue sleeps,
Winged with the power of some ruthless king,
And sweeps o'er the breast of the prostrate plain.
It was not a fiend from the regions of hell
That poured its low moan on the stillness of night;
It was not a ghost of the guilty dead,
Nor a yelling vampire reeking with gore.
But aye, at the close of seven years' end,
That voice is mixed with the swell of the storm;
And aye, at the close of seven years' end,
A shapeless shadow that sleeps on the hill
Awakens, and floats on the mist of the heath.
It is not the shade of a murdered man
Who has rushed uncalled to the throne of his God,
And howls in the pause of the eddying storm.
This voice is low, cold, hollow, and chill;
'Tis not heard by the ear, but is felt in the soul;
'Tis more frightful far than the Death-demon's scream,
Or the laughter of fiends when they howl o'er the corpse
Of a man who has sold his soul to hell.
It tells the approach of a mystic form.
A white courser bears the shadowy sprite:
More thin they are than the mists of the mountain
When the clear moonlight sleeps on the waveless lake.
More pale his cheek than the snows of Nithona
When Winter rides on the northern blast,
And howls in the midst of the leafless wood.
Yet, when the fierce swell of the tempest is raving,
And the whirlwinds howl in the caves of Inisfallen,—
Still secure 'mid the wildest war of the sky,
The phantom courser scours the waste,
And his rider howls in the thunder's roar.
O'er him the fierce bolts of avenging Heaven

Pause, as in fear to strike his head.
The meteors of midnight recoil from his figure;
Yet the wildered peasant that oft passes by
With wonder beholds the blue flash through his form:
And his voice, though faint as the sighs of the dead,
The startled passenger shudders to hear,
More distinct than the thunder's wildest roar.
Then does the dragon, who, chained in the caverns
To eternity, curses the champion of Erin,
Moan and yell loud at the lone hour of midnight,
And twine his vast wreaths round the forms of the demons;
Then in agony roll his death-swimming eyeballs,—
Though wildered by death, yet never to die.
Then he shakes from his skeleton folds the nightmares,
Who, shrieking in agony, seek the couch
Of some fevered wretch who courts sleep in vain.
Then the tombless ghosts of the guilty dead
In horror pause on the fitful gale.
They float on the swell of the eddying tempest,
And scared seek the cares of gigantic . . . ;
Where their thin forms pour unearthly sounds
On the blast that sweeps the breast of the lake,
And mingles its swell with the moonlight air.

MELODY TO A SCENE OF FORMER TIMES.

ART thou indeed for ever gone—
For ever, ever, lost to me?
Must this poor bosom beat alone,
Or beat at all if not for thee?
Ah! why was love to mortals given?
To lift them to the height of heaven,
Or dash them to the depths of hell?
Yet I do not reproach thee, dear:
Ah no! the agonies that swell
This panting breast, this frenzied brain,
Might wake my ———'s slumbering tear.
Oh! Heaven is witness I did love,
And Heaven does know I love thee still—
Does know the fruitless sickening thrill

When reason's judgment vainly strove
To blot thee from my memory,—
But which might never, never be.
Oh! I appeal to that blessed day
When passion's wildest ecstasy
Was coldness to the joys I knew,
When every sorrow sunk away!
Oh! I had never lived before! . . .
But now those blisses are no more!
And, now I cease to live again,
I do not blame thee, love,—ah no!
The breast that feels this anguished woe
Throbs for thy happiness alone.
Two years of speechless bliss are gone:—
I thank thee, dearest, for the dream.
'Tis night: what faint and distant scream
Comes on the wild and fitful blast?
It moans for pleasures that are past,
It moans for days that are gone by.
O lagging hours, how slow you fly!—
I see a dark and lengthened vale,
The black view closes with the tomb:
But darker is the louring gloom
That shades the intervening dale.
In visioned slumber for awhile
I seem again to share thy smile,
I seem to hang upon thy tone:—
Again you say: "Confide in me,
For I am thine, and thine alone,
And thine must ever, ever be."
But oh! awakening still anew,
Athwart my enanguished senses flew
A fiercer deadlier agony!

[*End of Margaret Nicholson.*]

THE TEAR.

I.

OH! take the pure gem to where southerly breezes
Waft repose to some bosom as faithful as fair,

In which the warm current of love never freezes,
As it rises unmingled with selfishness there,
Which, untainted by pride, unpolluted by care,
Might dissolve the dim icedrop, might bid it arise,
Too pure for these regions, to gleam in the skies.

II.

Or where the stern warrior, his country defending,
Dares fearless the dark-rolling battle to pour,—
Or o'er the fell corpse of a dread tyrant bending,
Where Patriotism, red with his guilt-reeking gore,
Plants liberty's flag on the slave-peopled shore,—
With victory's cry, with the shout of the free,
Let it fly, taintless Spirit, to mingle with thee!

III.

For I found the pure gem when the daybeam returning
Ineffectual gleams on the snow-covered plain,
When to others the wished-for arrival of morning
Brings relief to long visions of soul-racking pain.
But regret is an insult—to grieve is in vain:
And why should we grieve that a Spirit so fair
Seeks heaven to mix with its own kindred there?

IV.

But still 'twas some Spirit of kindness, descending
To share in the load of mortality's woe,
Who over thy lowly-built sepulchre bending,
Bade sympathy's tenderest tear-drop to flow.
Not for *thee* soft compassion celestials did know:
But, if angels can weep, sure man may repine—
May weep in mute grief o'er thy low-laid shrine.

V.

And did I then say for the altar of Glory
That the earliest, the loveliest, of flowers I'd entwine,
Though with millions of blood-reeking victims 'twas gory,
Though the tears of the widow polluted its shrine,
Though around it the orphans, the fatherless, pine?
O Fame! all thy glories I'd yield for a tear
To shed on the grave of a heart so sincere.

January 1811.

LOVE.

WHY is it said thou canst not live
In a youthful breast and fair,
Since thou eternal life canst give—
Canst bloom for ever there—
Since withering pain no power possessed,
Nor age, to blanch thy vermeil hue,
Nor Time's dread victor, Death, confessed,
Though bathed with his poison-dew?
Still thou retain'st unchanging bloom,
Fixed, tranquil, even in the tomb.

And oh! when on the blessed, reviving,
The day-star dawns of Love,
Each energy of soulsurviving
More vivid soars above,
Hast thou ne'er felt a rapturous thrill,
Like June's warm breath athwart thee fly,
O'er each idea then to steal,
When other passions die?—
Felt it in some wild noonday dream,
When sitting by the lonely stream
Where Silence says "Mine is the dell,"
And not a murmur from the plain,
And not an echo from the fell,
Disputes her silent reign.

April 1811.

BIGOTRY'S VICTIM.

I.

DARES the llama, most fleet of the sons of the wind,
The lion to rouse from his skull-covered lair?
When the tiger approaches, can the fast-fleeting hind
Repose trust in his footsteps of air!
No! abandoned he sinks in a trance of despair:
The monster transfixes his prey:
On the sand flows his life-blood away,
Whilst India's rocks to his death-yells reply,
Protracting the horrible harmony.

II.

Yet the fowl of the desert, when danger encroaches,
Dares fearless to perish, defending her brood,
Though the fiercest of cloud-piercing tyrants approaches,
Thirsting—ay, thirsting—for blood,
And demands, like mankind, his brother for food:—
Yet more lenient, more gentle, than they,—
For hunger, not glory, the prey
Must perish. Revenge does not howl o'er the dead,
Nor ambition with fame crown the murderer's head.

III.

Though weak as the llama that bounds on the mountains,
And endued not with fast-fleeting footsteps of air,
Yet, yet will I draw from the purest of fountains,
Though a fiercer than tiger is there;
Though more dreadful than death it scatters despair,
Though its shadow eclipses the day,
And the darkness of deepest dismay
Spreads the influence of soul-chilling terror around,
And lours on the corpses that rot on the ground.

IV.

They came to the fountain, to draw from its stream
Waves too pure, too celestial, for mortals to see;
They bathed for awhile in its silvery beam,
Then perished—and perished like me.
For in vain from the grasp of the Bigot I flee:
The most tenderly loved of my soul
Are slaves to his hated control.
He pursues me—he blasts me! 'Tis in vain that I fly!
What remains but to curse him—to curse him, and die?

28 *April*, 1811.

TO THE MOONBEAM.

Moonbeam, leave the shadowy vale,
To bathe this burning brow!
Moonbeam, why art thou so pale,
As thou walkest o'er the dewy dale
Where humble wildflowers grow?

Is it to mimic me?
But that can never be,—
For thine orb is bright,
And the clouds are light
That at intervals show the star-studded night.

Now all is deathy still on earth,
Nature's tired frame reposes;
And, ere the golden morning's birth
Its radiant hues discloses,
Flies forth its balmy breath.
But mine is the midnight of death;
And Nature's morn
To my bosom forlorn
Brings but a gloomier night, implants a deadlier thorn!

Wretch! suppress the glare of madness
Struggling in thine haggard eye!
For the keenest throb of sadness,
Pale despair's most sickening sigh,
Is but to mimic me.
And this must ever be
When the twilight of care
And the night of despair
Seem in my breast but joys, to the pangs that wake there!
May 1811.

ON A FÊTE AT CARLTON HOUSE.

(FRAGMENT).

BY the mossy brink,
With me the Prince shall sit and think;
Shall muse in visioned Regency,
Rapt in bright dreams of dawning Royalty.
1811.

TO ——.

O THOU
Whose dear love gleamed upon the gloomy path
Which this lone spirit travelled, drear and cold

But swiftly leading to those awful limits
Which mark the bounds of time, and of the space
When time shall be no more,—wilt thou not turn
Those spirit-beaming eyes, and look on me,
Until I be assured that earth is heaven,
And heaven is earth?

1811.

TO A STAR.

SWEET star which, gleaming o'er the darksome scene,
Through fleecy clouds of silvery radiance fliest!
Spanglet of light on evening's shadowy veil
Which shrouds the daybeam from the waveless lake,
Lighting the hour of sacred love, more sweet
Than the expiring morn-star's paly fires!
Sweet star! when wearied nature sinks to sleep,
And all is hushed—all save the voice of love,
Whose broken murmurings swell the balmy blast
Of soft Favonius, which at intervals
Sighs in the ear of Stillness—art thou aught but
Lulling the slaves of interest to repose,
With that mild pitying gaze?—Oh! I would look
In thy dear beam till every bond of sense
Became enamoured!

1811.

LOVE'S ROSE.

HOPES that swell in youthful breasts,
Live they this, the waste of time?
Love's rose a host of thorns invests:
Cold, ungenial, is the clime
Where its honours blow.
Youth says: "The purple flowers are mine"—
Which die the while they glow.

Dear the boon to fancy given,
Retracted while it's granted:
Sweet the rose which lives in heaven
(Although on earth 'tis planted);
Where its honours blow,
While by earth's slaves the leaves are riven
Which die the while they glow.

Age cannot love destroy:
But perfidy can blast the flower,
Even when, in most unwary hour,
It blooms in fancy's bower.
Age cannot love destroy:
But perfidy can rend the shrine
In which its vermeil splendours shine.

1811.

TO MARY, WHO DIED IN THIS OPINION.

MAIDEN, quench the glare of sorrow
Struggling in thine haggard eye:
Firmness dare to borrow
From the wreck of destiny;
For the ray morn's bloom revealing
Can never boast so bright an hue
As that which mocks concealing,
And sheds its loveliest light on you.

Yet is the tie departed
Which bound thy lovely soul to bliss?
Has it left thee brokenhearted
In a world so cold as this!
Yet, though, fainting fair one,
Sorrow's self thy cup has given,
Dream thou'lt meet thy dear one,
Never more to part, in heaven.

Existence would I barter
For a dream so dear as thine,
And smile to die a martyr
On affection's bloodless shrine.
Nor would I change for pleasure
That withered hand and ashy cheek,
If my heart enshrined a treasure
Such as forces thine to break.

MOTHER AND SON.

I.

SHE was an aged woman; and the years
Which she had numbered on her toilsome way
Had bowed her natural powers to decay.
She was an aged woman; yet the ray
Which faintly glimmered through her starting tears,
Pressed into light by silent misery,
Hath soul's imperishable energy.
She was a cripple, and incapable
To add one mite to gold-fed luxury:
And therefore did her spirit dimly feel
That poverty, the crime of tainting stain,
Would merge her in its depths, never to rise again.

II.

One only son's love had supported her.
She long had struggled with infirmity,
Lingering to human life-scenes; for to die,
When fate has spared to rend some mental tie,
Would many wish, and surely fewer dare.
But, when the tyrant's bloodhounds forced the child
For his cursed power unhallowed arms to wield—
Bend to another's will—become a thing
More senseless than the sword of battlefield—
Then did she feel keen sorrow's keenest sting;
And many years had passed ere comfort they would bring.

III.

For seven years did this poor woman live
In unparticipated solitude.
Thou mightst have seen her in the forest rude
Picking the scattered remnants of its wood.
If human, thou mightst then have learned to feel.
The gleanings of precarious charity
Her scantiness of food did scarce supply.
The proofs of an unspeaking sorrow dwelt
Within her ghastly hollowness of eye:
Each arrow of the season's change she felt.
Yet still she groans, ere yet her race were run,
One only hope: it was—once more to see her son.

IV.

It was an eve of June, when every star
Spoke peace from heaven.—
She rested on the moor. 'Twas such an eve
When first her soul began indeed to grieve:
Then he was there; now he is very far.
The sweetness of the balmy evening
A sorrow o'er her aged soul did fling,
Yet not devoid of rapture's mingled tear:
A balm was in the poison of the sting.
This aged sufferer for many a year
Had never felt such comfort. She suppressed
A sigh—and, turning round, clasped William to her breast!

V.

And, though his form was wasted by the woe
Which tyrants on their victims love to wreak,
Though his sunk eyeballs and his faded cheek
Of slavery's violence and scorn did speak,
Yet did the aged woman's bosom glow.
The vital fire seemed reillumed within
By this sweet unexpected welcoming.
Oh consummation of the fondest hope
That ever soared on fancy's wildest wing!
Oh tenderness that found'st so sweet a scope!
Prince who dost pride thee on thy mighty sway,
When *thou* canst feel such love, thou shalt be great as they!

VI.

Her son, compelled, the country's foes had fought,
Had bled in battle; and the stern control
Which ruled his sinews and coerced his soul
Utterly poisoned life's unmingled bowl,
And unsubduable evils on him brought.
He was the shadow of the lusty child
Who, when the time of summer season smiled,
Did earn for her a meal of honesty,
And with affectionate discourse beguiled
The keen attacks of pain and poverty;
Till Power, as envying her this only joy,
From her maternal bosom tore the unhappy boy.

VII.

And now cold charity's unwelcome dole
Was insufficient to support the pair;
And they would perish rather than would bear
The law's stern slavery, and the insolent stare
With which law loves to rend the poor man's soul—
The bitter scorn, the spirit-sinking noise
Of heartless mirth which women, men, and boys,
Wake in this scene of legal misery.

. . . . . .

January 1812.

THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION.

I.

BROTHERS! between you and me
Whirlwinds sweep and billows roar:
Yet in spirit oft I see
On thy wild and winding shore
Freedom's bloodless banners wave,—
Feel the pulses of the brave
Unextinguished in the grave,—
See them drenched in sacred gore,—
Catch the warrior's gasping breath
Murmuring "Liberty or death!"

II.

Shout aloud! Let every slave,
Crouching at Corruption's throne,

Start into a man, and brave
Racks and chains without a groan;
And the castle's heartless glow,
And the hovel's vice and woe,
Fade like gaudy flowers that blow—
Weeds that peep, and then are gone;
Whilst, from misery's ashes risen,
Love shall burst the captive's prison.

III.

Cotopaxi! bid the sound
Through thy sister mountains ring,
Till each valley smile around
At the blissful welcoming!
And O thou stern Ocean deep,
Thou whose foamy billows sweep
Shores where thousands wake to weep
Whilst they curse a villain king,
On the winds that fan thy breast
Bear thou news of Freedom's rest!

IV.

Ere the daystar dawn of love,
Where the flag of war unfurled
Floats with crimson stain above
The fabric of a ruined world—
Never but to vengeance driven
When the patriot's spirit shriven
Seeks in death its native heaven!
There, to desolation hurled,
Widowed love may watch thy bier,
Balm thee with its dying tear.

14 *February* 1812.

TO IRELAND.

BEAR witness, Erin! when thine injured isle
Sees summer on its verdant pastures smile,
Its cornfields waving in the winds that sweep
The billowy surface of thy circling deep.
Thou tree whose shadow o'er the Atlantic gave
Peace, wealth, and beauty, to its friendly wave,

. . . its blossoms fade,
And blighted are the leaves that cast its shade;
Whilst the cold hand gathers its scanty fruit,
Whose chillness struck a canker to its root.

February 1812.

EYES.

How eloquent are eyes!
Not the rapt poet's frenzied lay
When the soul's wildest feelings stray
Can speak so well as they.
How eloquent are eyes!
Not music's most impassioned note
On which love's warmest fervours float
Like them bids rapture rise.
Love, look thus again,—
That your look may lighten a waste of years,
Darting the beam that conquers cares
Through the cold shower of tears.
Love, look thus again!

1812.

THE DÆMON OF THE WORLD.

CONCLUSION.

AWHILE the Spirit paused in ecstasy.
Yet soon she saw, as the vast spheres swept by,
Strange things within their belted orbs appear.
Like animated frenzies, dimly moved
Shadows and skeletons and fiendly shapes,
Thronging round human graves, and o'er the dead
Sculpturing records for each memory
In verse, such as malignant gods pronounce,
Blasting the hopes of men, when heaven and hell
Confounded burst in ruin o'er the world.
And they did build vast trophies, instruments
Of murder, human bones, barbaric gold,
Skins torn from living men, and towers of skulls
With sightless holes gazing on blinder heaven,

Mitres, and crowns, and brazen chariots stained
With blood, and scrolls of mystic wickedness,
The sanguine codes of venerable crime.
The likeness of a thronèd king came by
When these had passed, bearing upon his brow
A threefold crown. His countenance was calm,
His eye severe and cold; but his right hand
Was charged with bloody coin, and he did gnaw
By fits with secret smiles a human heart
Concealed beneath his robe. And motley shapes,
A multitudinous throng, around him knelt,
With bosoms bare, and bowed heads, and false looks
Of true submission, as the sphere rolled by,
Brooking no eye to witness their foul shame,
Which human hearts must feel while human tongues
Tremble to speak. They did rage horribly,
Breathing in self-contempt fierce blasphemies
Against the Dæmon of the World, and high
Hurling their armèd hands where the pure Spirit,
Serene and inaccessibly secure,
Stood on an isolated pinnacle;
The flood of ages combating below,
The depth of the unbounded universe
Above, and all around
Nature's unchanging harmony.

1815.

MONT BLANC.

(A CANCELLED PASSAGE OF THE POEM).

THERE is a voice, not understood by all,
Sent from these desert caves. It is the roar
Of the rent ice-cliffs which the sunbeams call,
Plunging into the vale; it is the blast
Descending on the pines. The torrents pour . .

June 1816.

SINGING.

MY spirit like a charmèd barque doth swim,
Upon the liquid waves of thy sweet singing,

Far away into the regions dim
Of rapture—as a boat with swift sails winging
Its way adown some many-winding river.

1817.

A HATE-SONG.

(IMPROVISED).

A HATER he came and sat by a ditch,
And he took out an old cracked lute;
And he sang a song which was more of a screech
'Gainst a woman that was a brute.

1817.

TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.

(CANCELLED PASSAGES OF THAT POEM, p 167).

THE world is now our dwelling-place:
Where'er the earth one fading trace
Of what was great and free does keep,
That is our home. . . .
Mild thoughts of man's ungentle race
Shall our contented exile reap:
For who that in some happy place
His own free thoughts can freely chase
By woods and waves can clothe his face
In cynic smiles?—Child! *we* shall weep.

. . . . . .
This lament,—
The memory of thy grievous wrong,—
Will fade. . . .
But genius is omnipotent
To hallow . . .

1817.

JULIAN AND MADDALO.

(FRAGMENTS SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN ORIGINALLY INTENDED FOR THAT POEM).

"WHAT think you the dead are?"
"Why, dust and clay:—
What should they be?"
"'Tis the last hour of day.
Look on the west! How beautiful it is,
Vaulted with radiant vapours! The deep bliss
Of that unutterable light has made
The edges of that cloud . . . fade
Into a hue like some harmonious thought
Wasting itself on that which it had wrought,
Till it dies; . . . and between
The light hues of the tender, pure, serene,
And infinite tranquillity of heaven."

"Ay, beautiful! But, when our . . .

"Perhaps the only comfort which remains
Is the unheeded clanking of my chains,
The which I make, and call it melody."

1818.

PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.

(VARIATION OF THE LYRIC OF THE MOON, vol. i. p. 375).

As a violet's gentle eye,
Gazes on the azure sky
Until its hue grows like what it beholds;
As a grey and empty mist
Lies like solid amethyst
Over the western mountain it enfolds,
When the sunset sleeps
Upon its snow;
As a strain of sweetest sound
Wraps itself the wind around

Until the voiceless wind be music too;
As aught dark, vain, and dull,
Basking in what is beautiful,
Is full of light and love.

1819.

ODE TO LIBERTY.

(A CANCELLED PASSAGE OF THE POEM).

WITHIN a cavern of man's trackless spirit
Is throned an image so intensely fair
That the adventurous thoughts that wander near it
Worship, and, as they kneel, tremble, and wear
The splendour of its presence; and the light
Penetrates their dreamlike frame,
Till they become charged with the strength of flame.

1820.

EPIPSYCHIDION.

(CANCELLED PASSAGES OF THAT POEM).

AND what is that most brief and bright delight
Which rushes through the touch and through the sight,
And stands before the spirit's inmost throne,
A naked seraph? none hath ever known.
Its birth is darkness, and its growth desire:
Untameable and fleet and fierce as fire,
Not to be touched but to be felt alone,
It fills the world with glory—and is gone.

. . . . .

It floats with rainbow pinions o'er the stream
Of life, which flows like a . . dream
Into the light of morning, to the grave
As to an ocean.

. . . . . .

What is that joy which serene infancy
Perceives not, as the hours content them by
Each in a chain of blossoms, yet enjoys
The shapes of this new world, in giant toys

Wrought by the busy . . . ever new?
Remembrance borrows Fancy's glass, to show
These forms . . . sincere
Than now they are, than then perhaps they were,—
When everything familiar seemed to be
Wonderful, and the immortality
Of this great world, which all things must inherit,
Was felt as one with the awakening spirit,
Unconscious of itself, and of the strange
Distinctions which in its proceeding change
It feels and knows, and mourns as if each were
A desolation.

. . . . .

Were it not a sweet refuge, Emily,
For all those exiles from the dull insane
Who vex this pleasant world with pride and pain,
For all that band of sister spirits known
To one another by a voiceless tone?

1820.

TO EMILIA VIVIANI.

(Commencement of a second stanza to the Poem, p. 266).

SEND the stars light, but send not love to me.

1821.

FROM CALDERON'S CISMA D'INGALATERRA.

HAST thou not seen, officious with delight,
Move through the illumined air about the flower
The bee, that fears to drink its purple light,
Lest danger lurk within that rose's bower?
Hast thou not marked the moth's enamoured flight
About the taper's flame at evening hour,
Till kindle in that monumental fire
His sunflower wings their own funereal pyre?

My heart, its wishes trembling to unfold,
Thus round the rose and taper hovering came;

And passion's slave, distrust, in ashes cold
Smothered awhile, but could not quench, the flame;
Till love, that grows by disappointment bold,
And opportunity, had conquered shame,—
And like the bee and moth, in act to close,
I burnt my wings, and settled on the rose.

[1821. Translated by Medwin, with some re-touching by Shelley. The lines by Shelley are those of which the first words are printed in italics.]

UGOLINO.

(From Dante.)

Now had the loophole of that dungeon still
Which bears the name of Famine's Tower from me,
And where 'tis fit that many another will

Be doomed to linger in captivity,
Shown through its narrow opening in my cell
Moon after moon slow waning, *when a sleep*

That of the future burst the veil, in dream,
Visited me. It was a slumber deep
And evil; for I saw—or I did seem

To see—that *tyrant lord his revels keep,*
The leader of the cruel hunt to them,
Chasing the wolf and wolf-cubs up the steep

Ascent that from the Pisan is the screen
Of Lucca. *With him Gualandi came,*
Sismondi, and Lanfranchi, bloodhounds lean,

Trained to the sport and eager for the game,
Wide ranging in his front. *But soon were seen,*
Though by so short a course, with spirits tame

The father and his whelps *to flag at once.*

. . . . . .

When I
Heard locked beneath me of that horrible tower

The outlet, then into their eyes alone
I looked to read myself, *without a sign*
Or word.

. . . . . .

But, when to shine
Upon the world, not us, came forth the light

Of the new sun, and, thwart my prison thrown,
Gleamed through its narrow clink, a doleful sight,
Three faces, each the reflex of my own,

Were imaged by its faint and ghastly ray.

. . . . . .

"*Father, our woes so great were yet the less*

Would you but eat of us: 'twas you who clad
Our bodies in these weeds of wretchedness,—
Despoil them!"—*Not to make their hearts more sad,*

I hushed *myself.*

. . . . . .

Between the fifth and sixth day, ere 'twas dawn,
I found myself blind-groping o'er the three.

[1821. Translated by Medwin, with aid from Shelley. Whatever is not Shelley's is printed in italics.]

EPITHALAMIUM.

(VARIATION OF THE BRIDAL SONG, p. 277).

I.

NIGHT! with all thine eyes look down!
Darkness shed its holiest dew!
When ever smiled the inconstant moon
On a pair so true?
Hence, coy hour! and quench thy light,
Lest eyes see their own delight!
Hence, swift hour! and thy loved flight
Oft renew!

BOYS.

Oh joy! oh fear! what may be done
In the absence of the sun?
Come along!

II.

The golden gates of Sleep unbar!
When Strength and Beauty meet together,

Kindles their image, like a star
In a sea of glassy weather.
Hence, coy hour! and quench thy light,
Lest eyes see their own delight!
Hence, swift hour! and thy loved flight
Oft renew!

GIRLS.

Oh joy! oh fear! what may be done
In the absence of the sun?
Come along!

III.

Fairies, sprites, and angels, keep her!
Holiest powers! permit no wrong!
And return to wake the sleeper,
Dawn, ere it be long!
Hence, swift hour! and quench thy light,
Lest eyes see their own delight!
Hence, coy hour! and thy loved flight
Oft renew!

BOYS AND GIRLS.

Oh joy! oh fear! what shall be done
In the absence of the sun?
Come along!

THE SAME.

[Another version.]

BOYS SING.

NIGHT! with all thine eyes look down!
Darkness! weep thy holiest dew!
Never smiled the inconstant moon
On a pair so true.
Haste, coy hour! and quench all light,
Lest eyes see their own delight!
Haste, swift hour! and thy loved flight
Oft renew!

GIRLS SING.

Fairies, sprites, and angels, keep her!
Holy stars! permit no wrong!

And return to wake the sleeper,
Dawn, ere it be long!
Oh joy! oh fear! There is not one
Of us can guess what may be done
In the absence of the sun:—
Come along!

BOYS.

Oh! linger long, thou envious eastern lamp
In the damp
Caves of the deep!

GIRLS.

Nay, return, Vesper! urge thy lazy car!
Swift unbar
The gates of Sleep!

CHORUS.

The golden gate of Sleep unbar,
When Strength and Beauty, met together,
Kindle their image, like a star
In a sea of glassy weather.
May the purple mist of love
Round them rise, and with them move,
Nourishing each tender gem
Which, like flowers, will burst from them.
As the fruit is to the tree
May their children ever be!

1821.

BUONA NOTTE.

"BUONA notte, buona notte!"—Come mai
La notte sarà buona senza te?
Non dirmi buona notte, chè tu sai
La notte sà star buona da per sè.

Solinga, scura, cupa, senza speme,
La notte quando Lilla m'abbandona:
Pei cuori che si batton insieme
Ogrj notte, senzà dirla, sarà buona.

Come male buona notte si suona
Con sospiri e parole interrotte !—
Il modo di aver la notte buona
E mai non di dir la buona notte.

1821.

ADONAIS.

(FRAGMENTS ORIGINALLY INTENDED FOR THAT POEM).

[SHELLEY].

AND ever as he went he swept a lyre
Of unaccustomed shape, and . . . strings
Now like the . . . of impetuous fire
Which shakes the forest with its murmurings,
Now like the rush of the aërial wings
Of the enamoured wind among the treen,
Whispering unimaginable things,
And dying on the streams of dew serene
Which feed the unmown meads with ever-during green.

. . . . . .

[MOORE].

And the green paradise which western waves
Embosom in their ever-wailing sweep,—
Talking of freedom to their tongueless caves,
Or to the spirits which within them keep
A record of the wrongs which, though they sleep,
Die not, but dream of retribution,—heard
His hymns, and echoing them from steep to steep,
Kept—

. . . . . .

[LEIGH HUNT].

And then came one of sweet and earnest looks,
Whose soft smiles to his dark and night-like eyes
Were as the clear and ever-living brooks
Are to the obscure fountains whence they rise,
Showing how pure they are: a paradise
Of happy truth upon his forehead low
Lay, making wisdom lovely, in the guise
Of earth-awakening morn upon the brow
Of star-deserted heaven while ocean gleams below.

His song, though very sweet, was low and faint,
A simple strain.

. . . . . .

A mighty Phantasm, half concealed
In darkness of his own exceeding light,
Which clothed his awful presence unrevealed,
Charioted on the . . . night
Of thunder-smoke, whose skirts were chrysolite.

And like a sudden meteor which outstrips
The splendour-wingèd chariot of the sun,
. . . . . eclipse
The armies of the golden stars, each one
Pavilioned in its tent of light—all strewn
Over the chasms of blue night ——

1821.

HELLAS.

(FRAGMENTS SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN ORIGINALLY INTENDED FOR THAT POEM).

FAIREST of the Destinies,
Disarray thy dazzling eyes:
Keener far their lightnings are
Than the wingèd [bolts] thou bearest;
And the smile thou wearest
Wraps thee, as a star
Is wrapped in light.

COULD Arethûse to her forsaken urn
From Alpheus and the bitter Doris run,
Or could the morning shafts of purest light
Again into the quivers of the sun
Be gathered—could one thought from its wild flight
Return into the temple of the brain
Without a change, without a stain—
Could aught that is ever again
Be what it once has ceased to be—
Greece might again be free.

A STAR has fallen upon the earth
'Mid the benighted nations,
A quenchless atom of immortal light,
A living spark of night,
A cresset shaken from the constellations,—
Swifter than the thunder fell
To the heart of earth, the well
Where its pulses flow and beat;
And, unextinct in that cold source,
Burns, and on . . course
Guides the sphere which is its prison,
Like an angelic spirit pent
In a form of mortal birth;—
Till, as a spirit half arisen
Shatters its charnel, it has rent,
In the rapture of its mirth,
The thin and painted garment of the earth,
Ruining its chaos—a fierce breath
Consuming all its forms of living death.

1821.

THE INDIAN SERENADE.

(LINES APPARENTLY BELONGING TO THAT POEM).

O PILLOW cold and wet with tears!
Thou breathest sleep no more!

1821.

TO JANE—THE RECOLLECTION.

(OMITTED PASSAGE).

WERE not the crocuses that grew
Under that ilex-tree
As beautiful in scent and hue
As ever fed the bee?

1822.

NOTES BY W. M. ROSSETTI.

P. 1.

"Is it a party in a parlour, &c. [*Peter Bell, by W. Wordsworth.*]"

The reader will not need to be assured that no such lines as these are to be found in "*Peter Bell*, by W. Wordsworth:" whether they are to be found in the other *Peter Bell* which has to be taken count of I cannot say for certain, but I presume not, and that the real author's name is "P. B. Shelley." The meaning of the title *Peter Bell* THE THIRD, and of some allusions in the course of the poem, is left wholly unelucidated in Mrs. Shelley's note: I must therefore explain it as well as I can—which, however, is not well, as I have not succeeded in setting eyes upon that now very rare squib, *Peter Bell, a Lyrical Ballad*, referred to by Shelley as Peter Bell "the first." There is no copy of it in the British Museum Library.

Wordsworth's poem of *Peter Bell* (relating, as we all know, to a blackguardly potter, who gets converted to propriety of life by a jackass and a methodist,) was notified as about to appear, and poetical readers were on the alert for it, when a *brochure* entitled *Peter Bell, a Lyrical Ballad*, issued from the press, being in fact a satire on certain traits of Wordsworth's mind and poetry. It was written, as I am informed, by John Hamilton Reynolds, author of the *Garden of Florence*, &c., a verse-writer of much more than common talent and point, now more nearly forgotten than he ought to be: but of course his name was not given on the title-page. Soon after this "Peter Bell the first," came out "Peter Bell the second"—*i.e.* the genuine poem by Wordsworth; some commotion and bewilderment being caused in the minds of readers by this rapid and conflicting Petrine succession. Both poems were reviewed in the *Examiner*, (26 April and 3 May 1819); and the line adopted by the reviewer in criticizing Wordsworth's poem was to deprecate his exhibiting a moral conversion as the result of terror, partly semi-superstitious and partly religious, especially the fear of damnation. This, I imagine, may have served as the starting-point for Shelley's motto, ending

"All silent, and all—damned!"

At any rate, knowing something of the poems from the *Examiner* critique ("Mr. Examiner Hunt . . presented me to two of the Mr. Bells"), and presumably something more from the poems themselves, Shelley seized upon the subject, and produced his *Peter Bell the Third*. The reader acquainted with Wordsworth's poem will perceive that the story indicated (such as it is) in Shelley's has really nothing to do with that of the poet of Rydal Mount: and I should doubt whether it had much consecutive connexion with that of Mr. Reynolds. Seven stanzas from the

latter, extracted in the *Examiner*, are merely sarcastic hits at Wordsworth, under the name of "Peter Bell": they begin

"He hath a noticeable look,"

and end

"Peter Bell hath brother none."

P. 1.

"Thomas Brown Esq. the Younger, H. F."

This is the pseudonym which Moore used in his satirical poems, *The Twopenny Postbag* and *The Fudge Family*. "H. F." remains to be accounted for: Mr. Garnett suggests to me that it may possibly stand for "Historian of the Fudges."

P. 2.

"To occupy a permanent station in the literature of my country."

These words are quoted (not with strict verbal correctness) from Wordsworth's dedication, addressed to Southey, of his *Peter Bell*.

P. 8.

"There is a Castles, and a Canning."

Castles was a government spy, much loathed in those days; so also Oliver, mentioned on p. 24.—I am unable to fill up the name left blank in the succeeding stanza (iii). The statement that the personage "has lost his wits, or sold them," might be supposed to indicate Southey; but the ensuing assertion that he "ever grows more grim and rich" seems to point to some renegade more conspicuous for worldly station.

P. 12.

"To bully *out* another's guilt."

This had got into print before I could avail myself of the quite indisputable correction pointed out to me by Mr. Fleay—"*one* another's."

P. 13.

"Thus—although unimaginative."

I have substituted "although" for "though:" conceiving that the metre requires this change.

P. 14.

"*Bocca baciata*" &c.

These lines from Boccaccio mean: "A mouth that has been kissed loses not its charm, but renews like the moon." A passage from a letter addressed by Shelley to Leigh Hunt (27 Sept. 1819), much about the time when he wrote *Peter Bell the Third*, may be appropriately quoted here. "I have been lately reading this most divine writer [Boccaccio]. He is, in a high sense of the word, a poet, and his language has the rhythm and harmony of verse. I think him not equal certainly to Dante or Petrarch, but far superior to Tasso and Ariosto, the children of a later and of a colder day. I consider the three first as the productions of the vigour of the infancy of a new nation—as rivulets from the same spring as that which fed the greatness of the Republics of Florence and Pisa. . . . How much do I admire Boccaccio! What descriptions of Nature are those in his little introductions to every new day!—it is the morning of life stripped of that mist of familiarity which makes it obscure to us. Boccaccio seems to me to have possessed a deep sense of the fair ideal of human life, considered in its social relations: his more serious theories of love agree especially with mine. He often expresses things lightly too which have serious meanings

of a very beautiful kind. He is a moral casuist; the opposite of the Christian, stoical, ready-made, and worldly system of morals. Do you remember one little remark (or rather maxim) of his, which might do some good to the common narrow-minded conceptions of love? '*Bocca baciata*' &c."*

P. 17.

"Sweet, both to feel and understand,
As pipkins late *to* mountain cotter."

"*For* mountain cotter" (in apposition with "*for* all the land") would perhaps be the true reading.

P. 17.

"And Mr. —— the bookseller."

The rhythm seems to indicate that the word represented by the —— is a monosyllable: otherwise I should infer "Longman" to be the correct name, as the firm of Longman & Co. were the publishers of *Peter Bell*, and of other poems by Wordsworth issued about the same time.

P. 18.

"Another: 'Let him shave his head.'"

There is no rhyme to "head"—"hope" and "Pope" being the rhymes which ensue. This matter of rhyme is by no means scrupulously attended to in *Peter Bell the Third*; but the present is an extreme instance. As a substitute for "head," "top" or "crop" might be suggested.

P. 18.

"One more: 'Is incest not *enough*?'"

"Enough" has (again) no rhyme; this first line of the stanza being supposed to rhyme with the third and fourth lines, which end with the words "liar" and "fire." Sooner than leave the first line wholly rhymeless, one might be tempted to assume that Shelley meant it should (by way of exception) rhyme with the second and fifth lines, ending with "too" and "you;" to effect which, "enough" might be re-spelled as "enow."—As to the gist of the lines, incest and adultery, these accusations were never, I presume, launched by the most rabid of reviewers against the respectable Wordsworth: there was another contemporary poet, Shelley himself, in whose ears that particular sort of dingdong was much oftener rung.

P. 19.

"'Tis very cruel
To speak of me and *Betty* so!'"

This name has hitherto stood "Emma." But see, in the *Shelley Memorials* (p. 139) the letter addressed by Shelley to his publisher Ollier on 14th May 1820. "For 'Emma' read 'Betty,' as the name of Peter's sister. 'Emma,' I recollect, is the real name of the sister of a great poet who might be mistaken for Peter."

P. 22.

"The old Peter Bell—the hard old potter."

I have ventured to insert the word "Bell:" without this or some such monosyllable the metre is miserably cramped.

P. 22.

"'And I and you,
My dearest Soul, will then make merry,

* *Essays, Letters from Abroad*, &c., vol. ii. pp. 183, 184.

As the Prince Regent did with Sherry,—
Ay, and at last desert me too.'"

The meaning of the last line is by no means distinct to me. If it ran "desert *him* too," that would be intelligible enough, as completing the statement of the Prince Regent's conduct to Sheridan. If this surmise is not correct, perhaps the last line should be understood as the retort of the "Soul" to Peter Bell,—as much as to say: "Yes, you would make merry with me as the Prince Regent did with Sherry; and, like him, you too would in the end desert me." But the whole thing is too uncertain to me to allow of a change in the text.

P. 23.

"To have heard him, like a male Molly."

The metre of this line is very loose. Perhaps we should read—"like *to* a male Molly."

P. 23.

"'May Carnage and Slaughter'" &c.

The allusion in these lines is to Wordsworth's *Thanksgiving Ode on the Battle of Waterloo*. The passage more particularly referred to has been softened down in later issues of Wordsworth's poems, but it used to stand thus:

"We bow our heads before Thee, and we laud
And magnify Thy name, Almighty God!
But Thy most dreaded instrument
In working out a pure intent
Is man arrayed for mutual slaughter:
Yea, Carnage is thy daughter."

P. 24.

"'*Fewer*
Have fluttered tamer to the lure
Than he.'"

"Fewer" is obviously wrong, in point of meaning; it should be "few." But no doubt Shelley, looking to the requirement of rhyme, wrote "fewer," not reflecting that it makes no real sense.

P. 27.

"Were dead to their harmonious strife."

The construction of this line, in connexion with the earlier part of the stanza, is not very clear. It appears, however, that "*their* harmonious strife" must be "the harmonious strife of the earth and springs, and of the air and winds;" which sense I have aimed at bringing out by the punctuation.

P. 29.

"The fourth part of a long poem in blank verse."

This can only point to *The Excursion*. I find no such allusion in the fourth part of that poem,—nor indeed, so far as a cursory reinspection of it goes, in any part.

P. 29.

"I need scarcely observe that nothing personal to the author of *Peter Bell* is intended in this poem."

Mrs. Shelley's observations on *Peter Bell the Third* appear to be more courteous than candid. Surely it is manifest that Shelley *does* here "pitch into" Wordsworth with a will, on two grounds more especially: 1st, that he was time-serving and con-

ventional in opinion, and, 2nd, that he was prosy and dull in writing. That these views, as entertained by Shelley, were accompanied by and consistent with a very intense admiration of Wordsworth and his poetry on certain other grounds, will of course remain none the less true. A letter to Mr Peacock dated 25th July 1818 (*Fraser's Magazine*, March 1860) puts the point very plainly. "I wish you had sent me some of the overflowing villany of those apostates. What a pitiful wretch that Wordsworth! That such a man should be such a poet! I can compare him with no other but Simonides, that flatterer of the Sicilian tyrants, and at the same time the most natural and tender of lyric poets."

Shelley sent *Peter Bell the Third* to Leigh Hunt on 2 Nov. 1819, for publication by Ollier:* it was never published, however, till after the author's death. Shelley says in writing to Mr. Ollier, 15 Dec. 1819: "I think *Peter* not bad in his way; but perhaps no one will believe in anything in the shape of a joke from me." And to Hunt: "The author is to be kept a secret. . . My motive in this is solely not to prejudge myself in the present moment; as I have only expended a few days in this party squib, and of course taken little pains. The verses and language I have let come as they would, and I am about to publish more serious things this winter: afterwards (that is next year, if the thing should be remembered so long) I have no objection to the author being known, but *not now*."

P. 30.

"The tenderness with which he *treats* the Pigs."

In previous texts, "*beats* the Pigs." Can there be any doubt that "*treats*" is the right word? "*Charité*" (named lower down on page 30) refers probably to the Princess *Char*lotte—as Mr. Swinburne suggests to me.

P. 34.

Pyrganax.

This name has hitherto been spelled "Purganax." The personage is meant for Lord Castlereagh (so Medwin affirms, and the reader will not fail to see it for himself). Now it is clear that Pyrganax is a Greek compound—Πύργος, castle, and ἄναξ, king=Castle-reagh; so Pyrganax is the proper spelling. (Not that I mean to affirm that Castlereagh does veritably mean "Castle of the kings:" I am informed that it may *possibly* mean that, but more probably "Grey Castle." Shelley presumably knew as little Irish as I do). The phrase which occurs in the first speech of Pyrganax, "The boldest turn their backs upon themselves," was a *de facto* utterance of Lord Castlereagh.

P. 35.

"'Tis the same thing. If you *but* knew as much."

I have taken the liberty of inserting "*but*." Some such word is obviously needed for the metre.

P. 36.

"But if
This Gadfly should drive Iona *hither*?

Here is another defective line. Perhaps the insertion of a "*but*" (after "should") would again be the readiest emendation to make.

P. 37.

"Disinherited
My eldest son Chrysaor" &c.

* This fact, and the extract which follows, are given in Mr. Garnett's *Relics of Shelley*. In the *Essays, Letters*, &c. (vol. ii. p. 206) there is a different letter to Hunt dated Nov. 1819, enclosing "a piece for the *Examiner*," and a note alleges that this piece was *Peter Bell the Third*. But that must be a mistake.

The reader will perceive here an allusion to the paper-money discussions of the time in England. Shelley was very gravely impressed with a conviction of impending bankruptcy in this country: his published letters to Mr. Gisborne contain recommendations to that gentleman to withdraw his investments in the British funds.

P. 37.

"And then my little grandchildren, the Gibbets."

This about the Gibbets is a ludicrous anachronism on Shelley's part. We hear of a "new-married" couple, whose wedding is notified as a novelty, already the parents of various children old enough to "read a select chapter in the bible" &c.

P. 37.

Enter Gadfly, *followed by Leech and Rat.*

I have added the words in italics; for soon afterwards we find the Leech and Rat saying their say, without (in previous editions) any prior notification of their presence.

P. 39.

Adiposa.

There would be no difficulty in naming the titled lady indicated by this pseudonym. But perhaps that scandal may now be allowed to sleep: poor Adiposa has been a skeleton this long while.

P. 40.

"A jury of the Pigs. Pack them then."

'Again an unmetrical line. "Go pack them then" would be a not very daring emendation.

P. 40.

"Between the ears of the old ones . . ."

I have introduced the . . . The sentence is, to say the least of it, clearly not complete.

P. 40.

"This plan might be tried too. Where's General
Laoctonos? It is my royal pleasure."

Hitherto "Laoctonos" has always been printed as belonging to the first of these two lines: thus the first was grossly lengthened out, and the second docked.

P. 40.

Dakry.

This personage (with the name which means "a Tear") is obviously intended for Lord Chancellor Eldon; whose facility of weeping is again glanced at in the *Masque of Anarchy* and in the lines *To the Lord Chancellor*, and with the same simile of millstones, which is taken from Shakspeare's *Troilus and Cressida*: "Queen Hecuba laughed that her eyes ran o'er.—With millstones."

P. 43.

"Sausages, bristles, and blood-puddings."

This line defies metre; an easy modification would be

"Bristles, and sausages, and blood-puddings."

P. 43.

"Who have, by frequent squeaks, dared to impugn."

I have felt warranted here in adopting a slight transposition. The original runs

"Who, by frequent squeaks, have dared impugn."

P. 46.

"His heart is seen to beat through his waistcoat."

No doubt Shelley took this amusing stage-direction from a similar one in the *Nightmare Abbey* of his friend Peacock—"His heart is seen to beat through his upper benjamin."

P. 48.

"Court Porkmen with marrow-bones and cleavers."

I have interpolated here the words "Court Porkmen." Without these words, it appears that the persons who hold the "marrow-bones and cleavers" are the Priests: but, as we find immediately afterwards a, "Chorus of Priests, accompanied *by the Court Porkmen* ('Porkman' in previous editions) *on marrow-bones and cleavers*," it seems quite clear that the true holders of these instruments of music, in the first instance, must be the Porkmen, and not the Priests.

P. 54.

"The world will take more interest in his slightest word *than from* the waters of Lethe."

There is evidently something defective here: probably it should be "than *flows* from:" or the omission may arise from laxity of language consequent upon laxity of thought.

P. 55.

"To thy fair feet a winged Vision came," &c.

These lines must no doubt refer to the *Revolt of Islam*, dedicated to Mary Shelley. "And that is dead" is not a minutely accurate account of its fate.

P. 59.

"Dog-headed, *bosom-eyed*, and bird-footed."

The idea of a woman with eyes instead of nipples to her breasts had taken strong hold of Shelley: see the Life, p. lxxxix.

P. 61.

"Had changed those rugged blocks of savage stone."

I think "rugged" must be right here. It is an innovation, for hitherto "ragged" has always been printed.

P. 62.

"Belongs to each and all who gaze *thereon*."

In previous editions, the word is "upon," instead of "thereon." Syntax and sense are left in a glaringly incomplete state with "upon"; and, as I cannot suppose that Shelley would deliberately have retained it, I have hazarded the emendation in the text, with some compunctious visitings.

P. 67.

"The water flashed,—like sunlight, by the prow
Of a noon-wandering meteor flung to heaven."

The meaning of this is not altogether perspicuous. I rather suppose that we are to understand it thus:—"The water, cloven by the prow of the boat, flashed in the sun; and, thus flashing, it looked as if it had been sunlight flung up to heaven by the prow of the boat [or the wings of Hermaphroditus], which, in brightness and swiftness, might have been taken for a meteor seen at noon." I have slightly modified the punctuation, to bring out this sense. If this is not right, I presume we ought to read—

"The water flashed, like sunlight, by the prow,—
Or a noon-wandering meteor flung to heaven."

P. 67.

"The fabulous Thamondocana."

Ptolemy, in his Geography, mentions this city: it is now supposed not to be "fabulous," but the same as Timbuctoo—which the French traveller Caillé, the first European who visited it, ascertained to be in nearly the same latitude and longitude indicated by Ptolemy. (Mr. Garnett supplies me with these particulars).

P. 76.

Epipsychidion.

Shelley forwarded this poem to Mr. Ollier on 16 February 1821 for publication, saying:—"The longer poem I desire should not be considered as my own: indeed, in a certain sense, it is a production of a portion of me already dead—and, in this sense, the 'advertisement' is no fiction. It is to be published simply for the esoteric few; and I make its author a secret, to avoid the malignity of those who turn sweet food into poison, transforming all they touch into the corruption of their own natures. My wish with respect to it is that it should be printed immediately in the simplest form, and merely one hundred copies. Those who are capable of judging and feeling rightly with respect to a composition of so abstruse a nature certainly do not arrive at that number—among those, at least, who would ever be excited to read an obscure and anonymous production: and it would give me no pleasure that the vulgar should read it. If you have any bookselling reason against publishing so small a number as a hundred, merely distribute copies among those to whom you think the poetry would afford any pleasure."* In October of the same year the poet wrote to Mr. Gisborne:—"The *Epipsychidion* is a mystery. As to real flesh and blood, you know that I do not deal in those articles: you might as well go to a gin-shop for a leg of mutton as expect anything human or earthly from me. I desired Ollier not to circulate this piece except to the *συνετοί*: and even they, it seems, are inclined to approximate one to the circle of a servant girl and her sweetheart. But I intend to write a *Symposium* of my own, to set all this right."† The *συνετοί* would have comprised, or consisted solely of, Hunt, Godwin, Hogg, Peacock, Keats, Moore, Horatio Smith, and Byron; who are named in a letter of Shelley's dated 6th September 1819 (*Shelley Memorials*, p. 120) as those who are to receive whatever he publishes.—The word *Epipsychidion* may be understood as meaning "a poem on the soul." The work was mainly—perhaps completely—written in 1820: a letter from Mrs. Shelley dated 29th December 1820, printed in *Hunt's Correspondence*, speaks of it as then done. Hitherto, however, it has figured, in the collected editions, as written in 1821.

P. 76.

"Emilia Viviani, now imprisoned in the Convent of St. Anne, Pisa."

In the original edition of *Epipsychidion*, and all others till now, the initial "V——" has alone appeared (so also "E. V." in the poem at p. 266), and "the Convent of ——." The following account of the lady in question is given by Lady Shelley in the *Shelley Memorials*, being condensed from Medwin's details. "'The noble and unfortunate Lady Emilia V——' was the daughter of an Italian Count, and was shut up in a convent by her father until such time as he could find for her a husband of whom he approved. In this dreary prison [after she had been there about four years] Shelley saw her; and was struck by her amazing beauty, by the highly cultivated grace of her mind, and by the misery which she suffered in being debarred from all sympathy. She was subsequently married to a gentleman chosen for her by her father; and, after pining in his society, and in the marshy solitudes of the

* *Shelley Memorials*, pp. 152, 153. † *Shelley Memorials*, p. 154.

Maremma, for six years, she left him, with the consent of her parent,—and died of consumption in a dilapidated old mansion at Florence. This occurred long after the death of Shelley; who used frequently to visit her while she was living in the convent, and to do his utmost to ameliorate her wretched condition."

P. 76.

"*L'anima amante*" &c.

Translated for the benefit of those who are not Italian readers. "The loving soul launches beyond creation; and creates for itself in the infinite a world all its own, far different from this obscure and terrifying gulf." The sentence here cited is only a portion of an outpouring of some little length, given in Medwin's *Life of Shelley*, vol. ii.

P. 76.

"*Gran vergogna*" &c.

A quotation from Dante, signifying: "Great were his shame who should rhyme anything under a garb of metaphor or rhetorical colour, and then, being asked, should be incapable of stripping his words of this garb so that they might have a veritable meaning."

P. 76.

"Sweet Spirit, sister of that orphan one
Whose empire is the name thou weepest on."

This couplet has often been cited as unintelligible. Mr. Garnett (*Relics of Shelley*, p. 97) proposes an explanation which, if nothing clearer is offered, may satisfy enquirers. "The 'orphan one,' Emilia's spiritual sister, is Mary Shelley, whose mother died in giving her birth: the 'name' is Shelley's own."

P. 79.

"The crimson pulse of living Morn may quiver."

A horrid violation of grammar is given in previous editions—

"The crimson pulse of living morning quiver."

The words "morn may" might easily be misread and misprinted as "morning." I trust therefore that the reader will tolerate this emendation.

P. 80.

"We—are we not formed, as notes of music are" &c.

It seems to me almost a certainty that the opening "We" in this line ought to be cancelled.

P. 85.

"Where it may ripen to a brighter bloom!—"

This long sentence (which begins with the opening of the paragraph) has after all no syntactical conclusion: I have therefore thought best to punctuate its ending interjectionally as above.

P. 89.

"The sky
Peeps through their *winter-woof* of tracery."

This phrase may be accounted for by understanding that the season when the flowers fade is the winter, and that then the glinting of the light comes through the tracery of the denuded branches or tendrils. Still, I cannot help suspecting that Shelley wrote "*inter*-woof." "Inter-woof of tracery" would be a very natural variation upon the equally natural term "interwoven tracery": and words compounded with "*inter*" are continual in Shelley.

P. 91.

"Marina, Vanna, Primus, and the rest."

It is not for me to surmise with any confidence whether or not these names designate particular individuals. The name Marina is continually applied to Mrs. Shelley in the letters of Leigh Hunt and his wife. Vanna is the short of Giovanna, the Italian synonym of Jane, the Christian name of Mrs. Williams—a lady whom Shelley was introduced to shortly before the time when he dispatched *Epipsychidion* to London.

P. 92.

Adonais, an Elegy on the Death of John Keats.

These words of the title are followed, in the original edition, by the words "Author of *Endymion, Hyperion,*" &c.,—which have hitherto been reproduced in subsequent issues. I think the time has come to drop them. Keats is as indelibly recorded among the poets as Spenser or Dryden; and we should not deem it necessary to certify the reader that the one was the author of *The Faëry Queen*, and the other of *Absalom and Achitophel*.

It has been stated before now (as for instance by Captain Medwin in the *Shelley Papers*) that *Adonais* is modelled on Moschus and Bion. Shelley himself, as if to court the remark, gives the poem a motto from Moschus; and it seems to me a plausible suggestion that the name Adonais (which may stand for a Doric form of "Adonis," but is not, I believe, to be found in any classic author) was adopted by the poet to recall to mind the Idyll of Bion on Adonis. I am not aware, however, that any one has yet pointed out the parallel passages. Mr. G. S. D. Murray, of Christ Church College, Oxford, has noted those from Bion, and very obligingly placed them at my disposal for the advantage of this edition. The principal instances are as follows:—

Stanza i. "I weep for Adonais—he is dead!"

Αἴαζω τὸν Ἄδωνιν· ἀπώλετο καλὸς Ἄδωνις.

(I lament for Adonis; beautiful Adonis is dead).

Stanza vii. "While still
He lies as if in dewy sleep he lay."

Καὶ νέκυς ὢν καλός ἐστι, καλὸς νέκυς οἷα καθεύδων.

(Even as a corpse he is beautiful, a corpse beautiful as though in sleep).

Stanzas x., xi. "And fans him with her moonlight wings.

. . . .

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs, as if embalming them;
Another clipped her profuse locks."

Ἀμφὶ δέ μιν κλαίοντες ἐπιστενάχουσιν Ἔρωτες
κειράμενοι χαίτας ἐπ' Ἀδώνιδι, ὃς δὲ λέβησι
χρυσείοις φορέησιν ὕδωρ, ὁ δὲ μήρια λούει
ὃς δ' ὄπιθεν πτερύγεσσιν ἀναψύχει τὸν Ἄδωνιν.

(And round about him the Loves mourn for him weeping, having clipped their locks for Adonis; and one brings water in golden urns, and another washes his limbs, and another from behind fans Adonis with her wings).

Stanza xxvi. "Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live!
And in my heartless breast and burning brain
That word, that kiss, shall all thoughts else survive;
. . . I would give

All that I am to be as thou now art:—
But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart."

τοσσοῦτόν με φίλασον ὅσον ζώει τὸ φίλαμα
. . . φίλαμα δὲ τοῦτο φυλάξω
ὡς αὐτὸν τὸν Ἄδωνιν. . . .
ἃ δὲ τάλαινα,
ζώω καὶ θεὸς ἐμμὶ καὶ οὐ δύναμαί σε διώκειν.

(Kiss me so far as a kiss lives . . . and I will guard this kiss as 'twere Adonis' self. . . . But I unhappy live, and am a goddess, and cannot follow thee).

P. 92.

Ἀστὴρ πρὶν μὲν ἔλαμπες κ. τ. λ.

The distich by Plato which Shelley here applies to Keats will be found translated by him at p. 457 under the title *To Stella*.

P. 92.

"It is my intention to subjoin to the London edition of the poem a criticism" &c.

This intention was not fulfilled—owing (as stated in a letter of 25th September 1821 from Shelley to Mr. Ollier) to his having mislaid the volume containing *Hyperion*. Another generous idea of Shelley's, hardly to be called an intention, was to collect the remnants of Keats's writings, and publish them with a Life and criticism. This he mentions in a letter to Mr. Severn dated 29th November 1821; adding at the same time that the idea would not be carried out, as he doubted whether the criticism "would find a single reader." At such a discount in the market were those two glorious poets, Keats and Shelley, about half a year following the death of the former, and preceding that of the latter.

P. 92.

"John Keats died . . . on the 27th of December 1820."

Shelley mis-states the date: it should be the 23rd of February 1821. He seems to have been definitely misinformed after being indefinitely well-informed: for, in the original Pisan edition of *Adonais*, the date is given thus, "the —— of —— 1821." The allusion to Spring in stanza xvi. also seems to imply that the world had lost Keats just towards the close of winter. *Adonais* was written about May 1821.

P. 92.

"The savage criticism on his *Endymion* which appeared in the *Quarterly Review* produced the most violent effect on his susceptible mind," &c.

Shelley was not alone at the time in supposing this, and it is still a popular tradition among poetic readers: but the evidence supplied by the *Life and Letters of Keats* published by Lord Houghton shows distinctly that the notion was exaggerated —not to say, baseless.

P. 92.

"A most base and unprincipled calumniator."

No doubt Shelley here refers to the writer of the *Quarterly Review* notice of *Laon and Cythna*, whom he (after he became convinced it was not by Southey)—and not he alone—believed to be the Rev. Mr. (late Dean) Milman. It appears elsewhere that he ascribed to the same hand the harsh critique on *Endymion*. I am enabled to state positively that the review of Shelley was not by Milman: according to Medwin, it was affirmed by Hobhouse (Lord Broughton) to be the handiwork of a nephew of Coleridge, *i.e.* the late Judge—and this, I learn, is correct. Most literary enquirers, at the present day, attribute to Gifford the review of Keats.

P. 92.

"*Woman* . . . Mr. Barret."

Mr. Barret was the author of the poem *Woman*.

P. 93.

"'Almost risked his own life'" &c.

These words are quoted, but not verbatim, from a letter addressed by Colonel Finch to Mr. Gisborne. See Shelley's *Essays, Letters*, &c., vol. ii., p. 238.

P. 94.

"The third among the Sons of Light."

It may be questioned whom, as the first and second "Sons of Light," Shelley intended to associate with Milton. If he refers to *English* poets exclusively, Chaucer probably and Shakspeare certainly may be proposed. But perhaps he referred more particularly to *epic* poets. In that case, the two are assuredly Homer and Dante. His admirable *Defence of Poetry* says: "Homer was the first and Dante the second epic poet; that is, the second poet the series of whose creations bore a defined and intelligible relation to the knowledge and sentiment and religion of the age in which he lived, and of the ages which followed it—developing itself in correspondence with their development. . . . Milton was the third epic poet.

P. 95.

"Till darkness, and the law
Of change, shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain draw."

In the original *Adonais*, printed in Pisa, this line is different,

"Of mortal change, shall fill the grave which is her maw."

P. 96.

"Quenched its caress upon *his* icy lips."

So in the Pisa edition—and, I think, certainly correct. In subsequent editions, the word is "*its*."

P. 97.

"Amid the *faint companions* of their youth."

In the original edition this stands "the drooping comrades." Such a substitution can only, I presume, have been introduced into the text on Shelley's own authority.

P. 98.

"Like incarnations of the stars, *when* splendour
Is changed to fragrance."

It appears to me that the word "where" or "whose" might be preferred to "when." Perhaps "whose" would be the better of the two.

P. 100.

"They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low."

I incline to prefer the original reading—"spurn them *as they go*:" but, as it must be assumed that the alteration is Shelley's own, I have to leave it.

P. 100.

"Their garlands sere, their *magic* mantles rent."

I feel rather sceptical about this word "magic": but it figures in all the editions, and has at least a poetic ring.—The two poets mentioned in this stanza are (need it be said?) Byron and Moore: though whether Moore ever showed the faintest interest in or grief for Keats I know not. The next stanza (xxxii.) introduces Shelley himself; and xxxv., Severn.

P. 104.

Stanza xliii.

Shelley termed *Adonais* "the least imperfect of my compositions."* Its rhyming however, is scarcely more accordant to rigid rule than that of the *Revolt of Islam*. In this stanza, for instance, "bear" is made to rhyme with "bear." Other expressions used by Shelley regarding *Adonais* are—"a highly wrought *piece of art*, and perhaps better, in point of composition, than anything I have written":—"I know what to think of *Adonais*, but what to think of those who confound it with the many bad poems of the day I know not":—"It is absurd in any Review to criticize *Adonais*, and still more absurd to pretend that the verses are bad":—"I am especially curious to hear the fate of *Adonais*; I confess I should be surprised if that poem were born to an immortality of oblivion."

P. 106.

"Here pause. These graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each" &c.

No doubt Shelley is here thinking in especial of his own bitterly mourned infant son William, buried in this ground not two years before.

P. 107.

Hellas—Motto.

In a letter to Mr. Peacock dated 21st March 1821 Shelley requested that two seals might be procured for him inscribed with this same motto, and having as device a dove with outspread wings.

P. 108.

"The only goat-song which I have yet attempted."

This will be recognized as an allusion to the tragedy of *The Cenci*.

P. 115.

"Kings are like stars: they rise and set, they have
The worship of the world, but no repose."

An evident paraphrase from Bacon—one of the authors who excited Shelley's highest enthusiasm:—"Princes are like to heavenly bodies, which cause good or evil times, and which have much veneration but no rest." (Essay *Of Empire*). (This passage was recalled to my recollection by Mr. G. S. D. Murray).

P. 116.

"Of the great Prophet, whose *o'ershadowing* wings."

"*Over*shadowing," as in previous editions, seems a clear case of misprint.

P. 120.

"Another—'God, man, hope, abandon me.'"

This I have ventured to condense from the line, as it stands in previous texts—

"Another—'God, *and* man, *and* hope, abandon me.'"

I regard it as a clear and indisputable case of oversight; like the "alexandrine in the middle of a stanza" pointed out by Shelley himself as an erratum in the *Revolt of Islam*.

P. 121.

"*Thy* heart is Greek, Hassan."

The drama of *Hellas* is, for all practical purposes, consistent in using the pronoun

* *Shelley Memorials*, p. 159.

"thou" and its congeners throughout, instead of "you;" save in this instance, which, in previous texts, stands "*Your* heart." I think this small change, for the sake of uniformity of diction, not other than legitimate—especially as "thou" and "thy" appear in this very same speech of three and a half lines.

P. 121.

"Death is awake! Repulsèd on the waters!
They own no more the thunder-bearing banner
Of Mahmud."

I have introduced the note of admiration after "waters"—thus making the phrase follow on along with the exclamatory sentences which precede it. In previous editions there is merely a comma after "waters." With this punctuation, the only sense which can be attached to the clause is—"We being repulsed on the waters, they [the waters] own no more the thunder-bearing banner of Mahmud." But this sense, if intended, is expressed with a total defiance of syntax: and it seems to me a good deal safer to understand the meaning as I have given it. I should add that I regard "Repulsed *on* the waters" as most probably a misprint for "Repulsed *upon* the waters."

P. 122.

"The caves of the Icarian isles" &c.

This short speech of Mahmud appears to be much misprinted in previous editions: nor can I affirm that it is really correct now. "*Told* each to the other" [query, "each to other"?] has hitherto stood "*Hold* each to the other." This makes no sense. One may indeed choose to think that the complete phrase would be "hold *speech* each to the other;" and that the supplementing word, "speech" is held over till a later stage of the sentence, which later stage never comes after all, as an ellipsis takes place at the ensuing words "and then." But I think this a much less plausible supposition than that which I have adopted—viz., that "Hold" is a misprint for "Told." Then comes the line—

"Thou darest to speak—senseless are the mountains;"

which limps piteously in metre, and seems maimed even in meaning. To read "senseless *as* are the mountains" would set the metre right, and (to my thinking at least) would yield a fuller and more admissible sense.

P. 126.

"He stood, he says, upon Chelonites'
Promontory."

Chelonites must be the correct word: there is a promontory so named nearly opposite Cephallenia. Of "Clelonit's promontory" (as hitherto printed) no one ever heard that I know of, nor will the metre tolerate it.

P. 129.

"Fear,
Revenge, and Wrong, bring forth their kind."

The old texts give "*For*," instead of "Fear." To "*For*" there is no proper rhyme at all: but, in default of any such, one is reduced to supposing that it is meant to rhyme with "are" and "despair" (1) Considering how exceedingly faulty "For" is in this respect of rhyme, and moreover what a weak word it is in its place at the end of a line and opening of a speech, I very greatly doubt whether Shelley ever wrote it. "Fear" seems to me a likely substitute. True, it is still a faulty rhyme to "are" and "despair": but whether Shelley was capable of thus rhyming it is not a matter of conjecture. In the *Revolt of Islam* (C. vii., st. 31) he rhymes "fear" and "are"; and (C. v., st. 49) "fear" and "there." Moreover (though I do

not myself lay stress on this) "Fear" might even be held to rhyme with the preceding "hear," rather than with "are" and "despair." Again, in point of meaning, it seems to me that Shelley was extremely likely to link, in the present passage, "Fear" with "Revenge and Wrong." See, among other analogous passages, the line in *Rosalind and Helen*—

"But is *revenge and fear* and pride;"

or, in *Prometheus Unbound*—

"Till *hate, and fear*, and pain, light-vanquished shadows, fleeing."

On the whole, I think that "For" produces scarcely the least claim to be retained; "Fear," a very feasible claim to be admitted. Another tolerable substitute might be "War": but I regard this word as hardly consistent with the final line of the stanza.

(Since writing this note, I find that Mr. Fleay had anticipated me in suggesting "Fear"—an encouraging confirmation).

P. 129.

"But the unborn hour,
Cradled in fear and hope, conflicting storms,
Who shall unveil? Nor thou, nor I, nor any
Mighty or wise. I apprehend not
What thou hast taught me, but I now perceive
That thou art no interpreter of dreams."

The italicized line makes no metre, and may be safely pronounced misprinted. Possibly we ought to read "I apprehend not *well:*" but, feeling some doubt as to the precise meaning which Shelley meant to convey, I cannot venture to supply a word which might perchance distort his intention.

P. 133.

"Thou,
Like us, *shalt* rule" &c.

In my preface and notes to vol. i. I have cited this "shalt" (instead of "shall") as an indispensable emendation of my own. I now find that "shalt" is in the original edition of *Hellas*.

P. 135.

Semichorus II.

The sequence of idea embodied in this Semichorus is not wholly evident: and, finding as we do that it rhymes "abode" with "destroyed" (or else leaves each of these words without anything rhyming to it), we may well suspect a misprint somewhere. I cannot suggest anything that comes near to convincing myself.

P. 140.

"A Greek who had been Lord Byron's servant."

His name (as notified in Moore's *Life of Byron*) was Demetrius Zograffo.

P. 140.

"The taking of Constantinople in 1453."

Hitherto printed 1445: one of the unnumbered loosenesses so characteristic of Shelley. Another may be noticed on p. 139—the term "the Austrian tyrant" applied to Frederick Barbarossa and the emperors of his line.

P. 143.

"With *mountain* winds, and babbling springs,
And *moonlight* seas."

I get the word "moonlight" from the original edition (*Alastor and other Poems*, 1816)—a very rare little volume, for which I am indebted to Mr. Swinburne. In subsequent editions, "moonlight" had disappeared altogether; and "mountain" had got repeated in this line from the preceding one.

P. 144.

Stanzas.—April 1814.

The purport of these Stanzas has never, so far as I know, been cleared up to the reader by any of the persons who could speak with authority. They appear to me to be addressed by way of apostrophe to Shelley himself, on his then impending separation from his first wife Harriett. If so, they are important in point of date, as the separation did not actually take place till about 17th June.

P. 148.

"To think that a most unambitious slave,
Like thou, *should* dance" &c.

All editions hitherto have given "*shouldst*" instead of "*should*." This emendation ought perhaps to be companioned by another—a change of "*thou*" into "*thee*."

P. 149.

"The greater part were published with *Alastor*."

All were so published, except the *Lines* dated November 1815.

P. 149.

"Coleridge, whom he never knew."

This appears to be a correct statement: though the contrary would certainly be inferred from Shelley's Letter to Mrs Gisborne (pp. 249, 250), in which Godwin, *Coleridge*, Hunt, Horace Smith, and some others, are named, with the concluding remark—

"And these
(With some exceptions, which I need not teaze
Your patience by descanting on) are all
You and I know in London."

P. 149.

"The summer evening . . occurred . . in 1815."

Previous editions say "in *the autumn of* 1815:" an "Irish bull" which may very reasonably be suppressed by this time.

P. 150.

"Genius and death contended."

The original volume of *Posthumous Poems* gives "youth" instead of "death." I presume it to be a misprint.

P. 154.

"The strange sleep
Which, when the voices of the desert fail,
Wraps all in its own deep eternity."

This clause seems to have no defined syntactical position. I leave its punctuation much as I find it.

P. 155.

"Pile *around* it, ice and rock; broad vales between."

One would expect here "*round*" rather than "*around*."

P. 156.

"Faith so mild,
So solemn, so serene, that Man may be,
But for such faith, with Nature reconciled."

The meaning first suggested by the words "but for such faith" is "were it not for such faith." That, however, seems hardly consistent with the general context: perhaps we should understand "only by means of such faith."

P. 156.

"*Slow* rolling on."

The poem of *Mont Blanc* was first published in the *History of a Six Weeks' Tour* &c., 1817, and again in the *Posthumous Poems*. Both these editions give the word "*slow*." In later texts, the word is "slowly"—which might almost claim a preference for descriptive force of sound, but it is, I suppose, a mere misprint.—Mrs. Shelley (p. 158) speaks of the *Six Weeks' Tour* as if it was Shelley's own writing: but in fact it is hers.

P. 156.

"Is there, that from the boundary of the skies."

Hitherto this has stood printed "the boundaries of the sky." There is no rhyme to "sky"; whereas "skies" rhymes fairly enough with "precipice" and "ice." I think this may be regarded as sufficient justification of the change. Not that this "sky" would be the *only* instance of rhymelessness in *Mont Blanc;* the verses ending with "there," "forms," and "spread" on p. 155, with "world" on p. 156, and with "sun" on p. 157, have no rhymes.

P. 158.

Marianne's Dream.

The Marianne of this poem must be Mrs. Leigh Hunt. A letter from her husband to Shelley and his wife, 12th November 1818 (*Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, vol. . p. 125), says: "I have been writing a *Pocket-book* . . . It is entitled *The Literary Pocket-book, or Companion for the Lover of Art and Nature*, and contains . . original poetry; among which I have taken the liberty ('Hunt is too ceremonious sometimes') of publishing *Marianne's Dream*, to the great delight of said Marianne, not to mention its various MS. readers."

P. 160.

"Shot o'er the *vales, or* lustre lent."

I strongly suspect this ought to stand

"Shot o'er the *vales a* lustre lent."

None of the editions, however, countenances such an alteration.

P. 161.

"The *flames* were fiercely vomited
From every tower and every dome,
And dreary light did widely shed
O'er that vast flood's suspended foam."

Nothing, I conceive, can well be clearer than that we should here read "the *flames*"—not, as in previous editions, "the *waves*." Even if the general context did not dictate this emendation, the necessity of finding some adequate nominative for the clause "did shed light" would demand it.

P. 163.

"For I have seen thee from *thy* dwelling's door
Watch the calm sunset with them."

I suspect this ought to be "*their* (or possibly *my*) dwelling's door."

P. 163.

To Constantia, Singing.

I have not been able to ascertain who was the lady designated as Constantia. The name is most probably a fancy name given to the lady in question by Shelley in consequence of his enthusiasm for the heroine, Constantia Dudley, of a novel by Brockden Brown entitled *Ormond*. Mr. Peacock says that this heroine "held one of the highest places, if not the very highest place, in Shelley's idealities of female character."

P. 164.

Ozymandias.

This very grand sonnet is said (Middleton's *Life of Shelley*, vol. ii. p. 71) to have been written by Shelley in friendly emulation with Keats and Leigh Hunt, both of whom were composing sonnets on the Nile.

P. 165.

"Masked resurrection of a buried form."

Mrs. Shelley explains in a note that the "buried form" is the Star Chamber.—This poem to the Lord Chancellor, and the succeeding one, have not hitherto been admitted into the consecutive text of Shelley's works, but only inserted amid Mrs. Shelley's commentaries. There seems to be no reason why they should not be treated like his other productions. Some piecing-together of Mrs. Shelley's *Note on Poems of* 1817 is the consequence. Both these two compositions may be assigned to August (in which month, I believe, Lord Chancellor Eldon's decree was pronounced) or September of that year.

P. 167.

To William Shelley.

I have taken it upon me to supply this title—the poem having as yet appeared without any. Though Mrs. Shelley (see her Note, p. 171) says that the lines were consequent upon something which Lord Eldon had said while the question of bereaving Shelley of his two eldest children "was still pending," the words in the second stanza, "They have taken thy brother and sister dear," seem to show that the poem was not actually written until after the decree had been pronounced.

P. 169.

On Fanny Godwin.

These lines are barely more than a fragment, but may pass muster among the complete poems.—It has been said that the title (hitherto printed *On F. G.*) should run *On H. G.*—*i.e.*, Harriet Grove, the cousin with whom Shelley was in love in very early youth; and that the date must be prior to 1817. This, however, is a delusion. Mr. Peacock (*Fraser's Magazine*, June 1858) affirms that F. G., and 1817, are correct. The verses "relate to a far more interesting person [than Miss Grove] and a deeply tragic event." The "person," I am informed, was Miss Fanny Godwin, half-sister of Mrs. Shelley; and the "event" was her voluntary death by drowning. Thus Shelley's sister-in-law came to the same end as his first wife: a harrowing reiteration of family catastrophes, preluding that other catastrophe, of far different interest to the world at large—Shelley's own watery death.

P. 169.

"At the spectres, wailing, pale, and *ghast*."

Mr. Fleay suggests "wild" instead of "ghast"—thus avoiding a repetition, and supplying a needful rhyme. I certainly think he is right, but have not ventured to introduce the alteration into the text. In the following stanza "fade and *fly*" [not *flee*"] is also his emendation, and I have adopted it.

P. 170.

"Desire to trace its workings."

At this point of her note, Mrs. Shelley introduces, with a few interspersed observations of no essential importance, eight fragmentary poems, of which it has appeared to me more convenient to include seven among Shelley's Fragments (pp. 308 &c.), and one in the Appendix, p. 531. Contrariwise, the above-mentioned poem *To William Shelley*, which Mrs. Shelley characterizes as "unfinished stanzas," has not any such manifest quality of unfinish, I conceive, as to exclude it from the body of the poems. There is indeed one rhymeless line, in the final stanza; but, as we have had many opportunities of seeing, that was no odds to Shelley.

P. 171.

Passage of the Apennines.

Perhaps this impressive snatch of verse should be classed among the Fragments. It ends with a line to which no rhyme is supplied; and there is a very ragged edge in the verb "lay" where "lie" ought to be given. I incline to think, however, that it is not a Fragment, properly speaking. Mr. Fleay proposes to read "form" instead of "lay."

P. 172.

"The odour from the flower is gone."

I give this stanza as I find it in the *Posthumous Poems*. Most readers appreciative of true poetic aroma will, I fancy, agree with me in saying that the stanza was very much spoiled in the collected editions by being altered thus:

"The *colour* from the flower is gone
Which like thy *sweet eyes smiled* on me:
The *odour* from the flower is flown
Which *breathed* of thee and only thee!"

In the next stanza, from the same original, I have restored "shrivelled" instead of "withered."

Since writing the foregoing, I have had the pleasure of seeing the poem in Shelley's own MS., giving the same reading which appears in our text. This MS. has been kindly communicated to me by Lieutenant-Colonel C. Parker Catty, of the 46th Regiment, and his brother Mr. C. S. Catty; the verses being contained in a short note added by Shelley to a letter (7th March 1820) addressed by his wife to Miss Sophia Stacey, then in Florence. This lady was a ward of Mr. Parker, an uncle by marriage of Shelley, living in Bath. She saw a good deal of the poet and his wife in Italy from time to time, having lived three months in the same house with them in Florence—Madame Du Plantis', Via Val Fonda. She eventually married Captain J. P. Catty, R.E.—Shelley speaks of the verses as "a few *old* stanzas: I follow Mrs. Shelley's arrangement in placing them among the poems of 1818. The heading "To Miss ——" is in Shelley's MS. It must mean "To Miss Stacey;" but, as the verses appear to have been written some time before they were sent to that lady, I have abstained from inserting her name.—I shall have again to express my obligations to Colonel and Mr. Catty in the course of these notes.

P. 173.

"Their shadows o'er the chasm sightless and drear."

In the *Posthumous Poems* this line is quite different:

"The shadows which the world calls substance there."

I follow the collected editions.

P. 174.

"Every little living nerve

. . . .

Is like a sapless leaflet now."

I have rescued these lines (with some consciousness of audacity) from the annoying grammatical solecism of the original—

"Every little living *nerve*
Are like sapless leaflets now."

P. 177.

"Perish! Let there only be" &c.

It is strange to observe how insular even such an Englishman as Shelley can be on occasion. Venice, unless renovated by freedom, is to go to the dogs—leaving one only memory, that Lord Byron lived there for a while after quitting England! Oh! shades of Dandolo, of Marco Polo, of Bellini, Carpaccio, Giorgione, Titian, Tintoret, Veronese, and how many another immortal!—There happens to be evidence that this whole passage about Byron was an interpolated afterthought; for Mr. Frederick Locker possesses the original MS. of the passage, headed by Shelley with a note to say where it is to be inserted.

P. 182-3.

"The purple moon's transparent *might*:
The breath of the moist *earth* is light."

Mr Garnett (*Relics of Shelley*) says he has MS. authority for here substituting "might" for "light," and "earth" for "air,"—as the words appear in the collected editions. But for such authority, I would have been minded to sustain both "light" and "air" against their impugners (for the passage has been a good deal debated): but must, as the case stands, submit. Medwin (*Life of Shelley*, vol. i. pp. 332-3) gives the following variations, and implies that he has Shelley's own authority for at least the last of them:—

"The breath of the *west wind* is light;"
"Arises from its *mingled* motion;"
"How sweet, *if* any heart *could* share in my emotion;"
"Breathe o'er my *outworn* brain its last monotony."

P. 184.

Misery.

This poem was first printed by Captain Medwin in his *Shelley Papers* as *Invocation to Misery*: see the Memoir in our edition, p. cxv, as to the meaning he assigns to it. In subsequent reprints it has always been entitled *Misery, a Fragment*,—which may be correct; but, as it is not obviously fragmentary, I leave it among the complete poems. Medwin's version is evidently more imperfect than the one in the collected editions, which latter therefore I have followed implicitly. Yet there is one point where I prefer Medwin's version, as more uncommon and poetical—stanza x:

"Clasp me, till our hearts be grown
Like two *lovers* into one."

In the final stanza also the variation is such as to deserve notice:

"All the wide world beside us
Are like multitudinous
Shadows shifting from a scene:—
What but mockery may they mean?
Where am I?—Where thou hast been."

P. 186.

"The transcendent and glorious beauty of Italy."

Here follow, in the texts hitherto published, a few words as to the Letters of Shelley, only forthcoming when Mrs. Shelley wrote, but now long since issued and disseminated. The announcement of these writings (which contains nothing of permanent importance) may now be dropped.

P. 188.

"Like Sidmouth next, Hypocrisy."

This name has hitherto been a mere initial, "S***." If there could be the least doubt that the person intended was Lord Sidmouth, I would on no account identify him with "Hypocrisy": but doubt there is absolutely none—Lord Sidmouth having been Home Secretary in 1819, and main author of the "Manchester Massacre" in August of that year. His lordship was besides a man "of genuine piety."

P. 188.

"He was pale even to the lips
Like Death in the Apocalypse."

"Death in the Apocalypse" is not pale, but Death's horse is pale. This might lead us to surmise that the line here should run

"Like *Death's* in the Apocalypse."

My impression, however, is that there is no fault of print, but a haziness of memory or of phrase on Shelley's part.

P. 189.

"Hearing the *tempestuous* cry."

So in the original edition, published by Leigh Hunt in 1832: not "tremendous," as in subsequent texts. Some other variations occur—as for instance at stanza ix., where I have preferred the later reading, and stanza I. was wholly omitted by Hunt. What may be the *authority* for any verbal alterations I know not.

P. 191.

"And those plumes *its* light rained through."

I think, almost for certain, that Shelley must have written "*its* light": thus avoiding a meaningless and cacophonous inversion, hitherto printed—

"And those plumes *it* light rained through."

P. 200.

Song—To the Men of England.

The arrangement of the later stanzas of this song (only published in the collected editions) strikes me as ineffective, and barely logical in sequence. I suspect they should run—3, 8, 4, 7, 5, 6.

P. 202.

"An army which liberticide and prey
Make as a two-edged sword to all who wield."

I have here substituted "make" for "makes," which is both ungrammatical and misleading.

P. 202.

"Time's worst statute unrepealed."

Shelley, it would appear, here terms the "senate" itself—the unreformed Parliament—the "worst statute," or worst legalized institution, of Time.—This sonnet, *England in* 1819, must be the one which the poet sent to Leigh Hunt on 23rd November of that year, saying: "I don't expect you to *publish* it, but you may show it to whom you please."

P. 202.

"Two Political Characters of 1819."

Medwin tells us (and we might have divined for ourselves) that this lyric, like those among which it is inserted, relates to *English* politics; and that the "two Political Characters" are Lords Castlereagh and Sidmouth,—the same whom we have just seen denounced in the *Masque of Anarchy*.

P. 202.

"When the *moon* is in a fit."

There cannot, I suppose, be the least doubt that the moon—and not the "morn," as in previous editions—is here in question.

P. 203.

God Save the Queen.

Here is another poem to which I have affixed a title: one may almost say, however, that only *one* title can be the right one. The poem, in previous editions, is merely inserted in Mrs. Shelley's *Note on Poems of* 1819.

P. 205.

Ode to Heaven.

Some observations in Mrs. Shelley's Preface to the *Essays* &c. may be appropriately introduced here. "Shelley was a disciple of the immaterial philosophy of Berkeley. This theory gave unity and grandeur to his ideas, while it opened a wide field for his imagination. The Creation, such as it was perceived by his mind—a unit in immensity—was slight and narrow compared with the interminable forms of thought that might exist beyond; to be perceived perhaps hereafter by his own mind, or which are perceptible to other minds that fill the universe, not of space in the material sense, but of infinity in the immaterial one. Such ideas are, in some degree, developed in his poem entitled *Heaven*. And, when he makes one of the interlocutors exclaim,

"Peace! the abyss is wreathed with scorn
At your presumption, atom-born!"

he expresses his despair of being able to conceive, far less express, all of variety, majesty, and beauty, which is veiled from our imperfect senses in the unknown realm the mystery of which his poetic vision sought in vain to penetrate."

P. 208.

"As then, when to outstrip *thy* skiey speed."

This correction—"*thy*" instead of "*the*"—is given by Mr. Garnett, as on MS. authority, in the *Relics of Shelley*.

P. 209.

An Exhortation.

This must, I presume, be the poem which Shelley sent to Mrs. Gisborne on 8th May 1820, with the following remark: "As an excuse for mine and Mary's incurable stupidity, I send a little thing about poets, which is itself a kind of excuse for Wordsworth."

P. 210.

The Indian Serenade.

Such is the title of these delicious verses, as given in a copy found along with the volume of Keats which was on Shelley's person at the moment of his death. It appears (*Relics of Shelley*, p. 99) that the "Indian Air" which has hitherto supplied a title to the lines had been brought from India by Mrs. Williams, but was in fact Persian, not Indian. What remains to be said about the text of the *Indian Serenade* shall appear in the words of Mr. Browning (letter of 6th October 1857, in the *Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, vol ii. pp. 266-7). "Is it not strange that I should have transcribed for the first time, last night, the *Indian Serenade* that, together with some verses of Metastasio, accompanied that book [the volume of Keats]? —that I should have been reserved to tell the present possessor of them, to whom they were given by Captain Roberts,* what the poem was, and that it had been published? It is preserved religiously; but the characters are all but illegible, and I needed a good magnifying glass to be quite sure of such of them as remain. The end is that I have rescued three or four variations in the reading of that divine little poem—as one reads it, at least, in the *Posthumous Poems*. It is headed *The Indian Serenade* (not *Lines to an Indian Air*). In the 1st stanza, the 7th line is "Hath led me." In the 2nd, the 3d line is "And the champak's odours fail;" an the 8th, "O I beloved as thou art!' In the last stanza, the 7th line was 'Oh press it to thine own again.' Are not all these better readings—even to the 'hath' for 'has?'"—So far Mr. Browning. I must plead guilty of the presumption of disagreeing from that illustrious poet as to the superiority of these variations—save only the "hath:" and, as there seems to be no ground for affirming that the copy in which they occur is of higher authority than the one used for the *Posthumous Poems*, I have adhered to the latter. I have myself seen what purports to be a verbatim copy of the *Indian Serenade*, as recovered from Shelley's corpse; and find in it two further variations—

"*From* the first sweet sleep of night"—
"Where it *must* break at last."

Mr. Allingham (in *Nightingale Valley*) proposes "The champak odours *pine*" as an emendation avoiding a defect of rhyme: this is plausible, but I have not ventured to adopt it in the text—especially as it does not appear in a copy of the poem communicated to me by Mr. Catty. The verses were given to Miss Sophia Stacey in 1819, and perhaps written in 1818. They have hitherto been referred to the year 1821, and supposed to have had their origin in the oriental air to which Mrs. Williams (whom Shelley did not know in 1819) sang them.

P. 210.

Lines written for Miss Sophia Stacey.

These elegant verses had remained hitherto unpublished: our edition owes them to Lieutenant-Colonel and Mr. Catty. I take this opportunity of expressing my particular thanks, and the thanks of all Shelleyites, to these gentlemen and Mrs. Catty; and of intimating that Colonel Catty and his brother accompany their courteous presentation of the hitherto unpublished verses (the present *Lines* and *Time Long Past*) with the sole reservation to themselves of the exclusive right of setting them to music—the latter gentleman having already thus arranged these and some other lyrics by Shelley.

P. 212.

"Such is the scope of the *Ode to the Asserters of Liberty*."

The context in which Mrs. Shelley puts this indicates clearly enough that the Ode in question applies to England, and, in its opening, to the Manchester Massacre:

* The gentleman who built the fatal boat, the *Don Juan*.

Captain Medwin, indeed, says as much in his *Shelley Papers*. In its first form of publication, however (in the same volume with *Prometheus Unbound*, 1820), it is entitled *An Ode written October* 1819, *before the Spaniards had recovered their Liberty*. Perhaps this was a publisher's dodge.

P. 212.

Love's Philosophy.

Mr. J. H. Dixon (in *Notes and Queries*, January 1868) points out that this little poem is traceable to a French original (in eight lines only),

"Les vents baisent les nuages."

Shelley wrote *Love's Philosophy*, and also *Good-Night* and *Time Long Past*, in a copy of Leigh Hunt's *Literary Pocket-book* for 1819, presented by him to Miss Sophia Stacey on the 29th December 1820.

P. 213.

"My soul spurned the chains of its dismay,
And in the rapid plumes of song
Clothed itself, sublime and strong;
(As a young eagle soars the morning clouds among)
Hovering in verse o'er its accustomed prey."

I suppose the construction of this passage runs:—"My spirit clothed itself in the plumes of song, hovering in verse o'er its accustomed prey, as a young eagle soars among the morning clouds." To bring out this construction (connecting "hovering in verse" rather with the soul than with the eagle), I have put the penultimate line in a parenthesis. I suspect, however, that "hovering in verse" is intended to apply subordinately to the eagle, as well as primarily to the soul. As applied to the eagle, the phrase "in verse" sounds strange: but Shelley may have intended thus to indicate the *wheeling* flight of the eagle, and may have had present to his mind those lines of Dante wherein a like motion is described:

"Ricominciar, come noi ristemmo, ei
L'antico *verso*."

P. 214.

"The Sister-pest, congregator of slaves
Into the shadow of her pinions wide.
Anarchs and priests" &c.

This is substantially the punctuation of the original edition. In subsequent texts the line, "Into the shadow" &c., is made to belong to what succeeds, instead of what precedes. Either form of punctuation yields a good sense: in the uncertainty, I have thought it safer to abide by the original.

P. 215.

"Or piny promontory of the Arctic main."

The metre of this wondrous ode is equally elaborate and captivating; and (although there are certain latitudes of rhyming which Shelley always took) is uniform throughout—save in the present instance. Here we have (strictly considered) an alexandrine for the 2nd line of a stanza, as well as for the 8th and 15th, but the line reads rapidly—almost as if it were of five feet; and I think it was intended by Shelley to be thus read and accepted.

P. 218.

"Impress us from a seal,
All ye have thought and done! Time cannot dare conceal."

This is one of the passages of which, in writing to *Notes and Queries* in April 1868, I suggested an emendation. That emendation I now think untenable, though not

devoid of some plausibility. The passage, unamended, remains to be accounted for: that its verbal form is slurred appears to me undeniable. I construe it to mean:—"Do thou impress us living Spaniards and Englishmen, as if from a seal, O thou all that Spain and England have thought and done worthily in time past! Time canno dare to conceal that."

P. 218.

"Oh that the free would stamp the impious name
Of 'King' into the dust!"

Mr. Garnett enables me, from his personal knowledge of the MS., to fill-in here the word "king," which has hitherto been represented merely by four asterisks; a suppression equally pusillanimous and stupid on the part of Shelley's publishers or editors, suggesting to the horrescent reader (from the context, and the general tone of Shelley's speculation on questions of religion) other words which would be read in this passage with far greater repugnance.

P. 220.

Arethusa.

In her *Rambles in Germany and Italy*, Mrs. Shelley refers to the poems of Shelley which have been set to music—*Characteristic Songs of Shelley, by Hugh Pearson*, published by Alfred Novello; and says the *Arethusa*, and the invocation *To Night* (p. 264), are perhaps the more successful of all.

P. 224.

"To my song
Victory and praise in *its* own right belong."

This is clearly the correct wording and meaning of the sentence: not "*their* own right," as in former editions.

P. 225.

"That tall flower that wets
Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears
When the low wind its playmate's voice it hears.

Some question having arisen in *Notes and Queries* as to the flower here indicated, and one correspondent having suggested the foxglove, F. C. H. wrote (December 1867):—"I think the foxglove is not the flower alluded to: it blossoms in Summer, and he enumerates only Spring flowers. I should rather suppose him to mean the daffodil—or its congeners, the jonquil and narcissus. The daffodil is remarkable for holding wet, and scattering it when agitated by the wind." This very pertinent suggestion appears conclusive.—It will be observed that a line is wanting in the present stanza: there are only seven lines, instead of the normal eight. I see no particular reason to doubt that the stanza (a beautiful one enough in all conscience) has come down to us as Shelley left it. Dr. Dobbin (Ballivor, Ireland) suggests to me, however, that the reason why the *first* line in this stanza, and in some others, is deficient, may probably be "that the top of the MS. book has been shaved off by the binder, or pared, for economical reasons, before passing through the continental Post-office." The two poems to which this observation mostly applies—*The Question* and *Hymn to Mercury*—were, however, only published among the *Posthumous Poems*, and therefore without the author's final revision, and probably without passing through any Post-office.

P. 226.

"Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere."

This is the reading of the original edition (1820): the collected editions give

"And the Spirit of Love fell everywhere."

P. 228.

"Received more than all; *it loved more than ever,*
Where none wanted but it, could belong to the giver.

This stanza of the *Sensitive Plant* is by no means unambiguous to me in structure and meaning: the only change I have ventured to introduce into it is the above semicolon, in lieu of a comma. Leaving the reader to follow out for himself the general drift of the context, I will limit myself to suggesting that the words italicized may mean—"Of that [viz.: beauty] wherein none was wanting save itself, the Sensitive Plant had a love greater than any flower possessing beauty could impart or gratify: it loved more [beauty] than ever could belong to the giver." Or the best paraphrase may be that given by Mr Swinburne: The Sensitive Plant "felt more love than the flower which gave it gifts of light and odour could feel, having nothing to give back, as the others had, in return; all the more thankful and loving for the very barrenness and impotence of requital which made the gift a charity instead of an exchange."

P. 229.

"And *delight*, though less bright, was far more deep."

Mr J. H. Dixon has represented in *Notes and Queries* (3rd Ser., vol. ii., and 4th Ser., vol. i.) that "delight" is a misreading for "the light." He adds: "A literary gentleman who was an intimate friend of the poet . . assured me that Shelley, in his MS., often used the small Greek ϑ for *th*. Let any one write the words 'the light' after such a fashion, and it will be seen how easily an unlearned printer might mistake a ϑ for a *d*, and so print 'delight' instead of 'the light.'" This is exceedingly reasonable, and I for one must (if the premises as to the ϑ are admitted) confess to a belief that Shelley wrote "the light." But, having read the line scores of times with the word "delight," and always with a sense of its inner beauty and fascination, I grudge altering it: the more so as Mr Garnett (the best living authority as to Shelley's MSS.) assures me that he never observed in them any such use of the ϑ; Mr Trelawny says the like: and my own limited experience is wholly to the same effect.

P. 230.

"Told, whilst the *morn* kissed the sleep from her eyes."

In the original edition, the word is "*moon*;" but the reference to "daylight" in the succeeding stanza seems to prove that "morn" is the right reading.

P. 232.

"Which at first was *lovely* as if in sleep."

Here again "lovely"—instead of "lively," as in the original edition—appears to be correct.

P. 233-4.

Stanzas xiii., xiv., and xvii.

I have introduced some change into the punctuation of stanzas xiii. and xiv. Hitherto there has been a full stop at the end of xiii.; and then all the substantives in the first two lines of stanza xiv. were made to serve as nominatives to the verb,

"Stretched out *its* long and hollow shank."

"*Its*" cannot be allowed to do duty for "thistles, nettles, darnels," &c. &c.—though possibly the solecism is Shelley's own.—Stanza xvii. has been omitted in the collected editions. It is certainly somewhat repulsive; but was good enough for Shelley, and must remain so for his appreciative readers.

P. 236.

The Cloud.

This poem was first published in the *Prometheus* volume (1820), and is included, in Mrs. Shelley's collected editions, among the *Poems written in* 1820. Yet her Preface (p. xxi.) clearly intimates that it was written in England, on the Thames; if so, in 1818 at latest. I rather suspect that this latter is the surer guide as to the date, and the style of the poem would suggest a like induction. However, it is possible that Shelley *completed* the lyric in 1820; I therefore do not disturb Mrs Shelley's arrangement.

P. 239.

"Like an *em*bodied joy whose race is just begun."

"Embodied," instead of "*un*bodied," was proposed by Professor Craik; also the pause in stanza ii. at the end of the 2nd instead of the 3rd line.

P. 241.

"Thou lovest, but ne'er *knew* love's sad satiety."

"Knew" is of course a grammatical laxity; but the sound of the lovely line would be so spoiled by changing the word into "knew'st" that no rectification of grammar is permissible.

P. 242.

"And among the winds and beams."

This line, left rhymeless, ought to rhyme with "desire" and "fire." Mr. Fleay therefore suggests to read "higher" instead of "beams."

P. 244.

"Which in those hearts which *must* remember me."

Mr. Garnett (*Relics of Shelley*) gives, on MS. authority, this "*must*" instead of "*most*." He also supplies three other important emendations in this same *Letter to Maria Gisborne*:—

P. 246.—"With *lead* [*least*] in the middle."

P. 249.—"While Rebuke *cowers* [*stands*] pale and dumb."

P. 249.—"Which, with its own internal *lightning* [*lustre*] blind."

There is another line (p. 247) which in our edition, following the original *Posthumous Poems*, stands

"One chasm of heaven smiles, like the *Age* of Love."

In the collected editions "age" gives place to "eye." I feel very great doubt which of the two is correct; but incline to prefer the image of the "Age of Love," or "Golden Age," smiling "on the unquiet world,"—and so abide by the *Posthumous Poems*.

P. 245.

"With thumbscrews, wheels with tooth and spike and jag,
Which fishes found under the utmost crag
Of Cornwall" &c.

The above printed "which" has been "with" in all editions since the first. Besides this, in *all* the editions the punctuation brings to a pause the sentence before "with thumbscrews." Any reader who has heretofore understood the whole passsage beginning

"Or those in *philosophic* councils met,"

and ending "as panthers sleep," can only have done so by wholly disregarding the punctuation. Properly printed, the passage is seen to refer to the torture-engines sent over with the Spanish Armada, and wrecked off the Cornish coast. The epithet "philosophic" does not appear specially apposite: should it be "theosophic," or "philanthropic?"

P. 246.

"Henry will know
The thing I mean."

"Henry" is Mr. Henry Reveley, son of Mrs. Gisborne by her first marriage, the engineer mentioned in Mrs Shelley's note, p. 262.

P. 248.

"Or sadly blame
The jarring and inexplicable frame" &c.

Shelley evidently intended these words "or sadly blame" to mean "or [how we would] sadly blame;" hastily assuming, no doubt, that the needed "we would" had already been introduced higher up in the sentence. But that is not the case—the governing words being "how we spun." The oversight (which affects some ensuing lines also) cannot now be amended.

P. 249.

"You will see Coleridge; *he* who sits obscure."

This "*he*" should of course, in strict grammar, be "him." But it is only one out of many instances of a like laxity—so clearly *symptomatic* in Shelley that I have not felt called upon to make any alteration.

P. 249.

"You will see *Hogg*."

This name had not yet been printed in full: but no expert in Shelleyan matters could well feel any doubt that "Hogg" is intended, and I know on authority that that name is in the MS.

The line (p. 250)

"He is a pearl within an oyster-shell"

remains rhymeless; there seems little ground for surmising either misprint here, or the loss of a succeeding line. Close after comes "English Peacock." This name also has hitherto stood a bare initial, "P——:" but the way in which the name is connected with an allusion to a *bird* amounts to an identification. The lines regarding him have hitherto stood punctuated thus:

"And there
Is English P—— with his mountain Fair
Turned into a Flamingo,—that shy bird
That gleams i' the Indian air."

This would indicate that *Mrs.* Peacock (the "mountain fair") is turned into a flamingo. But the allusion to the flamingo's shyness, and to the disappearance of married men from their old haunts, shows pretty clearly that the shy flamingo is Peacock himself—a play on the bird-like surname. I have modified the punctuation to correspond.

P. 251.

"Oh that Hunt, ——, and ——, were there,
With everything belonging to them fair!"

The original edition indicates three personages here: [in the collected editions, only two are implied. The allusion seems to be rather to a single family than to three friends not inter-connected. Perhaps Hunt's sister-in-law and wife are to be understood as the blanks; in which case the line would run—

"Oh that Hunt, Bessy, and Marianne were there!"

P. 252.

"And in despite of . . . and of the devil."

This blank probably ought to be either "God" or "hell:" it is a pity no qualified

person has yet had the nerve and common sense to supply the correct word—which is obviously incapable of giving any serious offence. "Despite"—not "spite," as in the collected editions—is in the original text; so that we know the omitted word to be a monosyllable.

P. 252.

Epode I. α.

The designation of these so-called Epodes, and strophes and antistrophes, as given in previous editions, is (to quote from a letter with which Mr. Swinburne has obliged me) "chaotic to a degree. They are, as far as I can see, hopelessly muddled; *beginning* with an Epode (*after*-song)!" He has done his best to re-name them with some approach to common sense and system, and I have followed his lead,—or rather *intended* to follow it; for I now, too late to remedy it, observe that our "Epode II. β." (p. 253) should be "II. α.," and "I. α." (p. 255) "I. β." Mr. Fleay had also favoured me with a plan of re-naming, somewhat different in detail.—Shelley was evidently unconscious of his offence, for he speaks (p. 261) of "the *introductory* epodes."

P. 256.

"25 August 1820" [date of Ode to Naples].

This date is noted in a diary of Mrs. Shelley's, referred to in the *Shelley Memorials* (p. 133). In the *Posthumous Poems*, the date is given as "September 1820."

P. 257.

"When the north wind congregates in crowds."

This line would appear to be misprinted, or else left unfinished. The metre of the lyric is the ordinary heroic metre of five feet—not excluding even the second line of this stanza, if we read "towards" as a dissyllable: it can scarcely be supposed that Shelley intended to allow one solitary line to form an exception.

P. 259.

The Tower of Famine.

See Shelley's note to this poem, p. 262. Mr. Browning (than whom no man is better entitled to pronounce) says that Shelley has here—as in the case of the mad-house in *Julian and Maddalo*—made a mistake; supposing the building rightly called the Torre Guelfa to be the Tower of Famine. His *description* applies to the former; his *conception* to the latter. Of the true Tower of Famine, "the vestiges should be sought for in the Piazza de' Cavalieri."—This little snatch of *terza rima*, though not to be called a fragment, is manifestly no very finished piece of execution: indeed, some of the central lines appear to me hardly intelligible, and I doubt their being correctly printed. I have made no essential change in wording or punctuation, but suspect the lines in question should properly stand somewhat to the following effect:

"There stands the pile, a tower amid the towers
And sacred *domes*. *Each* marble-ribbèd roof,
The brazen-gated temples, and the bowers
Of solitary *wealth*, i' *the* tempest-proof
Pavilion of the dark Italian air,
Are by its presence dimmed. They stand aloof,
And are withdrawn, so that the *wall* (?) is bare:—
As if a spectre" &c.

P. 260.

Good-Night.

This song has hitherto been dated 1821, but (as already observed in my note at p. 566) was written by Shelley in the pocket-book he presented to Miss Sophia Stacey

in 1820. I follow that MS., which is considerably better (especially in the first line of the last stanza) than any heretofore published. See the Italian version, Appendix, p. 539. The same thought is embodied in one of Moore's lyrics.

P. 260.

Time Long Past.

As to these touching and musical verses, hitherto unprinted, see also the above-named note. The last stanza seems to allude to the death of William Shelley.

P. 262.

"It was on a beautiful *summer* evening."

This looks like a slip of Mrs. Shelley's, similar to the one noted from p. 149: for we have just before been told that the sojourn of Shelley near Leghorn was for a week or two in the *Spring*, and his letters indicate the middle of May as the approximate time. However, he was certainly there again in the summer, for his letter to Mrs. Gisborne, written in the same house, is dated 1st July 1820 (p. 244).

P. 263.

Dirge for the Year.

This lyric must be conceived as spoken by "Two Voices;" one of them condoling the death of the Year, and the other predicting her return to life. To mark this, I have introduced the inverted commas.

P. 264.

"Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day."

The reader will observe here a *replica* of an image which Shelley used in one of his earliest poems, the *Summer-Evening Churchyard, Lechlade*, st. ii. (p. 146), and also in *Alastor* (vol. i. p. 102). In the song *To Night*, Day is a *female* impersonation—

"Kiss *her* until she be wearied out."

But in the succeeding stanza we find, according to previous editions,

"And the weary Day turned to *his* rest."

I have altered this into "her," regarding the incongruity as beyond the bounds of tolerance.

P. 265.

From the Arabic. An Imitation.

Medwin says that these lines are "almost a translation from a translation" in the romance of *Antar*.

P. 268.

"And 'Fear'st thou?' and 'Fear'st thou?'" &c.

I apprehend that we are to understand these interrogations as so many interjectional queries exchanged between the lovers: I have therefore punctuated the stanza accordingly. Hitherto it has been given as one continuous speech from beginning to end.

P. 269.

To ——.

It seems feasible to regard these lovely lines as addressed to Emilia Viviani.

P. 271.

"What, Mother, dost thou laugh now he is dead?"

I have here substituted "thou" for "you," in conformity with the diction of the remainder of this poem—one of Shelley's most Titanic utterances.

P. 272.

"But we, though soon they fall."

It appears to me almost certain that this should be either "though soon *we* fall," or "*so* soon they fall."

P. 272.

"Shepherd those herds" &c.

"Shepherd," in lieu of "shepherds," is a grammatical laxity which Shelley probably fell into without reflecting about it: but which, had he reflected, he would perhaps have retained, rather than incur the cacophony of "shepherds" and "herds" in the same line.

P. 273.

Lines.

Hitherto unpublished. Communicated to me by Mr. Garnett.

P. 273.

"Unlike and far sweeter than they all."

The rhythm of this line (which is moreover rhymeless and loose in syntax) is, as it stands printed, anomalous, though certainly far from unbeautiful. The line seems intended for a decasyllabic rather than anything else, and should possibly stand—

"Unlike *them*, and far sweeter than they all."

P. 274.

"Fresh Spring, and Summer, *Autumn*, and Winter hoar."

The word "Autumn" had not hitherto appeared in this line. Mr. Fleay pointed out to me that it is required, for the purpose of completing, not only the full conception of the line, but also the metre, in correspondence with the preceding stanza. I regard this as an indisputable emendation, and introduce it accordingly, with thanks to Mr. Fleay.

P. 274.

Remembrance.

This lyric has hitherto been entitled *A Lament:* but I find the title *Remembrance* on the original MS., for which I am indebted to Mr. Trelawny—as also for the MSS. of the lines *To Edward Williams; The Magnetic Lady to her Patient; Lines* (when the lamp is shattered); *To Jane, The Invitation; To Jane, The Recollection; With a Guitar, to Jane;* and *To Jane* (the keen stars were twinkling). Most of them are written out by Shelley with exquisite neatness. From these MSS. I have been enabled to introduce several revisions of text, as well as title: I only specify the more important ones.—

St. 1, lines 2 and 3 inverted.

"My heart *to-day* [*each day*] desires *to-morrow* [*the morrow*]."

"Waste *a* [*one*] hope, *a* [*one*] fear, for me."

The poem was addressed to Mrs. Williams with these lines of message. "Dear Jane, If this melancholy old song suits any of your tunes, or any that humour of the moment may dictate, you are welcome to it. Do not say it is mine to any one, even if you think so: indeed, it is from the torn leaf of a book out of date. How are you to-day, and how is Williams? Tell him that I dreamed of nothing but sailing, and fishing up coral. Your ever affectionate, P. B. S." Of course this letter, and those quoted in the sequel to others of the above-named poems, have never yet been printed.

P. 274.

"Pansies let my flowers be."

In the MS. copy this line stands

"Sadder flowers find for me."

But here the rhyme is faulty; and it is certain that at some time or other Shelley

must have made the alteration we find in the text, as a letter from Mrs. Shelley to Miss Curran, (*Shelley Memorials*, p. 207), says: "In a little poem of his are these words, 'Pansies let my flowers be.'" It is possible that some of the readings I have introduced from the MS. had also been altered by Shelley: but of that I have no proof, and I have thought it, on the whole, safer to abide by the MS.

P. 275.

To Edward Williams.

This poem has hitherto been headed *To* ——, and may have puzzled many readers to guess the person addressed, or the condition of things referred to. One might have been disposed to fancy that the person addressed was a woman rather than a man. Some question may still exist as to the exact circumstances which gave rise to so desolate an utterance of manifestly real personal feeling; for myself, I can only infer that Shelley's intimacy with the Williamses, and frequent excursions to Pugnano to see them, had excited some degree of feminine pique—not rightly to be called jealousy—in the bosom of Mrs. Shelley. In other respects, at any rate, the case is now cleared up. This poem in MS. is headed simply *To* ——, but is accompanied by a letter from Shelley as follows.—"My dear Williams, Looking over the portfolio in which my friend used to keep his verses, and in which those I sent you the other day were found, I have lit upon these; which, as they are too dismal for *me* to keep, I send you. If any of the stanzas should please you, you may read them to Jane, but to no one else. And yet, on second thoughts, I had rather you would not. Yours ever affectionately, P. B. S." The more important revisions which the MS. supplies are these:—

"The wounded deer must seek the *herb* [*herd*] no more."

"Indifference, *which* [*that*] once hurt me, *is now* [*now is*] grown."

"Why I am not as I have *lately* [*ever*] been."

"Would do, and leave the scorner *unrelieved* [*unreprieved*]."

"Unrelieved" is not a correct rhyme, having to pair off with "believed" and "relieved": but on the other hand "unreprieved" has not a very clear meaning, and I can hardly imagine there is any authority for it.

P. 277.

"But two, which move
And *form* all others, life and love."

"Form" is the correction given by Mr. Garnett (*Relics of Shelley*), instead of "for."

P. 277.

A Bridal Song.

See also Appendix, pp. 537-8.

P. 278.

"There is much in the *Adonais*" &c.

Though I have separated *Adonais* from the shorter poems of 1821, it has not appeared to me worth while to separate also this very brief note of Mrs. Shelley's upon the elegy.

P. 278.

"He, together with a friend, contrived a boat" &c.

This friend was Lieutenant Williams.

P. 279.

"Some friends lived at the village of Pugnano."

Doubtless the Williamses.

P. 280.

The Magnetic Lady to her Patient.

This poem appeared first in the *Shelley Papers*. The circumstances are thus narrated in the accompanying memoir by Captain Medwin. "Shelley was a martyr to a most painful complaint, which constantly menaced to terminate fatally; and was subject to violent paroxysms which, to his irritable nerves, were each a separate death. I had seen magnetism practised in India and at Paris, and, at his earnest request, consented to try its efficacy. Mesmer himself could not have hoped for more complete success. The imposition of my hand on his forehead instantaneously put a stop to the spasm, and threw him into a magnetic sleep which (for want of a better word) is called somnambulism. Mrs. Shelley and another lady were present. The experiment was repeated more than once. During his trances I put some questions to him. He always pitched his voice in the same tone as mine. I enquired about his complaint, and its cure—the usual magnetic enquiries. His reply was 'What would cure me would kill me' (alluding probably to lithotomy). . . It is remarkable that in the case of the boy Matthew Schwir recorded by Dr. Tritchler, the patient spoke in French, as Shelley in Italian. He improvised also verses in Italian, in which language he was never known to write poetry. . . Shelley was afterwards magnetized by a lady; to whom he addressed some lines, of which I remember some of the stanzas."

The copy of this poem confided to me by Captain Trelawny is headed "For Jane and Williams only to see," and supplies the following emendations:—

"Might then have *charmed* [*chased*] his agony."

"What would cure that would kill me, Jane"—instead of

"'Twould kill me, what would cure my pain."

This original line of course shows—what Medwin says elsewhere—that the Magnetic Lady was Mrs. Williams.

P. 281.

Lines.

Captain Trelawny's copy of this lyric lacks the last stanza. It furnishes three emendations:—

"Sweet *notes* [*tones*] are remembered not."
"Like the wind *in* [*through*] a ruined cell."
"Why *chose* [*choose*] you the frailest."

It also gives the reading "the lost" (instead of "dead") "seaman's knell:" but the latter seems to me preferable, and the circumstances, I think, justify its retention.

P. 282.

"From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine *eagle* home
Leave thee naked to laughter."

I feel some suspicion that "eagle" is a misprint. A nest which is supported by rafters—built (it is natural to assume) in the eaves of a house—can scarcely be an "eagle home," or eagle's nest, or eyrie.

P. 282.

To Jane—The Invitation.

In the first collected edition this poem is entitled *The Pine-forest of the Cascine near Pisa*; which is worth bearing in mind as determining the locality. Captain Trelawny's copy supplies the revisions:

"Sit by the fireside *with* [*of*] sorrow.
"At length I find one *moment's* [*moment*] good."
"*And* [*To*] the pools where winter rains."
"In the deep east, *dun* [*dim*] and blind."

P. 283.

"Long having lived on *your* sweet food."

"Your" is my own substitution for "thy"—to harmonize with all the other pronouns in the context.

P. 284.

To Jane, The Recollection.

This was inscribed on the outside cover—"To Jane: not to be opened unless you are alone, or with Williams." The chief emendations derived from the original MS. are—

"Up *to* [*do*] thy wonted work I come, trace."
"Of the *white* [*wide*] mountain waste."
"Than calm in *water* [*waters*] seen."
The 6th line stands in the MS.
"The epitaph of glory *dead:*"
Somebody has altered this into "fled" in the collected editions; possibly without authority, but it sets the rhyming right, and I retain it.

P. 286.

"Less oft is peace in Shelley's mind."

The name is left blank in the MS., and stands "S——'s" in the collected editions: it seems time now to supply the right and only possible name.

P. 286.

With a Guitar, to Jane.

Trelawny remembers accompanying Shelley in his purchase of this immortalized guitar, at Leghorn. He gives in his *Recollections of the Last Days of Shelley and Byron* (pp. 67-75) a capital sketch of the circumstances under which these lines were composed. It is too long to quote save in a very abridged form. "Shelley never flourished far from water. . . . At Pisa he had a river under his window, and a pine-forest in the neighbourhood. I accompanied Mrs. Shelley to this wood in search of the poet on one of those brilliant Spring mornings we on the wrong side of the Alps are so rarely blessed with. . . . One of the pines, undermined by the water, had fallen into it. Under its lee, and nearly hidden, sat the poet, gazing on the dark mirror beneath, so lost in his bardish reverie that he did not hear my approach. . . . He was writing verses on a guitar. I picked up a fragment, but could only make out the first two lines—

'*Ariel to Miranda*:—Take
This slave of music.'

It was a frightful scrawl: words smeared out with his finger, and one upon the other, over and over in tiers, and all run together 'in most admired disorder.' It might have been taken for a sketch of a marsh overgrown with bulrushes, and the blots for wild ducks; such a dashed-off daub as self-conceited artists mistake for a manifestation of genius. On my observing this to him, he answered: 'When my brain gets heated with thought, it soon boils, and throws off images and words faster than I can skim them off. In the morning, when cooled down, out of the rough sketch (as you justly call it) I shall attempt a drawing.'" To receive a guitar from Shelley, accompanied by such charming verses comparing her to Miranda, was something for Mrs.

Williams to remember, and to make *her* a beautiful memory to many generations: but still higher honour is done to the exquisite loveableness of this lady (who survives her second husband, Mr. Jefferson Hogg) in the following words of a letter from Shelley to Leigh Hunt, 19th June 1822 (*Relics of Shelley*, p. 111):—"Williams is one of the best fellows in the world; and Jane his wife a most delightful person, who, we all agree, is the exact antitype of the Lady I described in the *Sensitive Plant*,—though this must have been 'a pure anticipated cognition,' as it was written a year before I knew her."

P. 288.

"For our belovèd Jane alone."

This is the reading in the MS. In the collected editions it stood "for our beloved *friend*." The emendation "one" (instead of "our") was proposed by Mr. Palgrave in his *Golden Treasury*, and seemed infallible, yet proves delusive: a caution to emendators, including the present editor.

P. 289.

"Bare woods whose branches *stain*."

My belief is that the word here ought to be "strain": but "stain" is not meaningless, as it may refer to the tints which come off on hands that touch soppy sprays of foliage.

P. 289.

To Jane.

The name in the title, and in the third line, has hitherto been left blank in the collected editions; but appears in the MS. copy, which concludes with this message. "I sat down to write some words for an ariette which might be profane; but it was in vain to struggle with the ruling spirit, who compelled me to speak of things sacred to yours and to Wilhelm Meister's indulgence. I commit them to your secresy and your mercy, and will try to do better another time."

P. 290.

Lines written in the Bay of Lerici.

This composition comes from the *Relics of Shelley* edited by Mr. Garnett, and had not hitherto been included in any collection of the poet's writings.

P. 290.

"As if to some elysian star
They sailed for drink to medicine
Such sweet and bitter pain as mine."

Without the word "They," this sentence, as printed in the *Relics of Shelley*, appears to be manifestly imperfect. No doubt the poem had not received any high amount of polish; and a chance omission of this sort is readily conceivable.

P. 291.

Epitaph.

This has hitherto been printed as a Fragment. I can discern nothing fragmentary in it, and therefore put it here (though without any certainty as to its real date). It has a sorrowful appropriateness to the fate of Shelley himself and his friend Williams.

P. 291.

"This morn thy gallant bark" &c.

These lines (of which no one need be eager to claim the authorship, so far as poetic merit goes) must be Mrs. Shelley's own: a copy of them, in her hand-writing, was disposed of in the Dillon sale in 1869.

P. 292.

"I at one time feared that the correction of the press might be less exact through my illness; but I believe that it is nearly free from error."

A happy conviction on Mrs. Shelley's part, which my own labours on the present edition prevent my sharing. The ensuing reference to "asterisks" has wellnigh, in our text, lost its applicability, save in the case of confessed fragments.

P. 293.

"The arrival of Leigh Hunt at *Genoa*."

This is undoubtedly correct. Mrs. Shelley (or her printer) had inadvertently given the name of "*Pisa*."

P. 296.

Fragments.

The reader will find transferred to this section of our edition many of the poems which, in previous editions, appear among the completed works. I have acted on the rule of treating as a fragment everything, whether of major or minor importance, that is visibly truncated. Several of the Fragments are obtained from the *Relics of Shelley*, and occasionally I shall add in these notes the very pertinent observations made Mr. Garnett upon such productions, with his initial "*G*" attached. In this section, as in the others, a chronological arrangement, so far as traceable, is adopted. Of the examples which he has rescued from oblivion, Mr. Garnett observes: "The dates appended to these Fragments are usually conjectural, but no important error will have been committed."

P. 296.

To ——.

These lines were written by Shelley whilst he was staying at the house of Mrs. Boinville, at Bracknell, shortly before his separation from Harriett, and under the influence of very gloomy feelings as to his domestic relations and prospects. They are apparently addressed to Mrs. Boinville, or else to her daughter, Mrs. Newton. In sending the lines to Hogg, Shelley termed them "the vision of a delirious and distempered dream which passes away at the cold clear light of morning. Its surpassing excellence and exquisite perfections have no more reality than the colour of an autumnal sunset."

P. 296.

To Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin.

This lyric has hitherto been printed as belonging to 1821, and with the title *To* ——. But Mr. Garnett has ascertained that it "was in fact written in June 1814 [*i.e.*, almost simultaneously with Shelley's separation from his first wife Harriett] and addressed to Mary. This poem has hitherto been wholly unintelligible: no one could conjecture either the occasion of its composition, or the person to whom it was addressed. The mystery is now elucidated, and the state of Shelley's feelings placed beyond dispute. While it is evident that he had conceived an ardent affection for Mary, and found his best refuge from his own domestic sorrows in her compassion,* it is equally manifest that, under a sense of obligation to another, he is doing his best to control the vehemence of his emotions. 'A moment' of sympathy has consoled him for prolonged suffering; yet he dreads 'censure' as much as 'reserve,' and deprecates imprudence no less than indifference. Something must have occurred to alter his views between the date of this poem and July 28th [when Shelley and Mary united, and quitted England together]; and the amicable character of his subsequent relations with Harriett indicates this to have been the discovery that she, equally with himself, had ceased to expect happiness from a continuance of their connexion."—(*G.*)—For my own remarks on this matter, see the Memoir, note p. lxxv.

* "Pending more explicit revelations, it may be hinted that circumstances existed to render Mary almost as much an object of sympathy to Shelley as he himself was to her."—(*G.*)

P. 297.

To ——.

Mrs. Shelley introduces this fragment, with others, into her note to the poems written in 1817. She implies, however, that these verses belong to a previous date: "I insert here also the fragment of a song, though I do not know the date when it was written—but it was early." In the last line I have given "pity*est*" instead of "pity"—for even a fragment need not gratuitously be printed as nonsense. I have also cancelled the division of the verses into three quatrain stanzas: apparently they are in fact a sonnet, complete save the two concluding lines.

P. 298.

Fragment iv.

"Remarkable as the only passage in which Shelley alludes to his home."—(*G.*)

P. 298.

Fragment vii.

This might be supposed to be an address to Leigh Hunt on his release from prison. If so, the date 1817, which is conjecturally given by Mr. Garnett, may be a little too late, the release having taken place in February 1815.

P. 299.

Prince Athanase.

Mrs. Shelley has given the following note on the course which this poem was intended to pursue. "The idea Shelley had formed of Prince Athanase was a good deal modelled on *Alastor*. In the first sketch of the poem, he named it *Pandemos and Urania*. Athanase seeks through the world the one whom he may love. He meets, in the ship in which he is embarked, a lady who appears to him to embody his ideal of love and beauty. But she proves to be Pandemos, or the earthly and unworthy Venus; who, after disappointing his cherished dreams and hopes, deserts him. Athanase, crushed by sorrow, pines and dies. 'On his deathbed, the lady who can really reply to his soul comes and kisses his lips.' (*The Deathbed of Athanase.*) The poet describes her [in the words of the final fragment, p. 307]. This slender note is all we have to aid our imagination in shaping out the form of the poem, such as its author imagined."—The character of Zonoras was intended as an idealization of Dr. Lind, referred to in vol. i. p. 253.

P. 307.

"Thou art the radiance which where ocean rolls
Invest*eth* it."

"Invest*est*," as in previous editions, is clearly ungrammatical.

P. 309.

Otho.

Of this fragment Mrs. Shelley says: "He had this year also projected a poem on the subject of Otho, inspired by the pages of Tacitus. I find one or two stanzas only, which were to open the subject."

P. 309.

"A deed it was to *wring*
Tears from all men."

I think "wring" must be the word written by Shelley. Hitherto it has been printed "buy," which is not only less apposite, but remains destitute of a rhyme.

P. 311.

"Into *her* mother's bosom sweet and soft."

The antecedent of "her" is "the soul"—*i.e.* "a Wood-nymph." Clearly therefore we ought to read "her," and not (as in previous texts) "their."

P. 311.

"(Like a vast fane in a metropolis)" &c.

I have introduced the parenthesis, beginning at this line, and ending at "branch-like traceries." Hitherto, without any such definite punctuation, the construction of the sentence has remained very vague. It will now be seen to run (as I apprehend it should) thus:—"They [the Wood-nymphs] make a green space among the meeting branches; in which space there is religion, and in which space there is also the mute persuasion of unkindled melodies" &c.

P. 312.

Fragment xxi.

These lines appear pretty clearly to be addressed to Byron, whom Shelley visited at Venice in 1818.

P. 313.

Scene from Tasso.

Shelley, writing to Mr Peacock from Milan, 20th April 1818, speaks thus of the drama he was then projecting. "I have devoted this summer, and indeed the next year, to the composition of a tragedy on the subject of Tasso's madness; which, I find upon inspection, is, if properly treated, admirably dramatic and poetical. But you will say I have no dramatic talent. Very true, in a certain sense: but I have taken the resolution to see what kind of tragedy a person without dramatic talent could write. It shall be better morality than *Fazio*, and better poetry than *Bertram*, at least." Mr Garnett remarks, with regard to the scene here preserved from the projected drama:—"It would appear that the envy of courtiers and Tasso's rivals would have been among the principal elements of the action: the piece would consequently have borne little resemblance to Göthe's *Tasso*, which it is doubtful whether Shelley ever read."

P. 314.

Marenghi.

Mrs. Shelley says:—"This fragment refers to an event, told in Sismondi's *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes*, which occurred during the war when Florence finally subdued Pisa, and reduced it to a province." On referring to Sismondi's book (vol. viii., pp. 142, 143, of the Paris edition of 1826), I find that the hero of this incomplete poem has always been misnamed in the previous texts of Shelley: his name is not Mazenghi, but Marenghi—also the local name is not Vad*a*, but Vad*o*. The heroic exploit of Marenghi is narrated by Sismondi as follows:—"Les Florentins ne croyaient guère possible d'ouvrir une brêche aux murs de Pise; en sorte qu'ils se proposaient de réduire la ville par la famine, tandis que leur armée attaquait successivement les divers châteaux du territoire. Les Pisans, de leur côté, s'efforçaient de se pourvoir de vivres: ils envoyèrent quelques galères chercher des blés en Sicile. L'une d'elles, surprise à son retour par des vaisseaux que les Florentins avaient fait armer à Gènes, se réfugia sous la tour de Vado. Un Florentin nommé Pierre Marenghi, qui errait loin de sa patrie frappé d'une sentence capitale, saisit cette circonstance pour rendre à ses concitoyens un service signalé. Il s'élança du rivage, un flambeau à la main, et s'approcha de la galère à la nage malgré les traits qu'on lançait contre lui. Percé de trois blessures, il continua longtemps à se soutenir sous la prou en soulevant son flambeau, jusqu'à ce que le feu se fût communiqué à la galère ennemie de manière à ne plus s'éteindre. Elle brûla en face de la tour de

Vado, tandis que Pierre Marenghi regagna le rivage. Il fut rappelé ensuite dans sa patrie avec honneur." The greater part of *Marenghi* is now first printed from a transcript made by Mr Garnett, and kindly placed by him at my disposal.

P. 320.

"Which fairies catch in hyacinth *bowls*."

The emendation of "bowls" instead of "buds" is given by Mr Garnett.

P. 321.

Fragment xxxiv.

I infer that these lines were written in the season of Mrs. Shelley's deep dejection for the loss of the beloved infant William. So also Fragment xxxvii. In the concluding line of No. xxxiv., the word "when" should, I suspect, be "where"—*i.e.* to the tomb.

P. 323.

"And where is truth? *On* tombs?" &c.

"*In* tombs" would seem a more natural reading.

P. 327.

A Vision of the Sea.

This poem is not a fragment in the same sense as others. It was published by Shelley during his lifetime (in the *Prometheus* volume); and its breaking off abruptly at the end must therefore be matter of option, not of casualty.

P. 327.

"As if heaven were ruining in,
Which they seemed to sustain with their terrible mass.
As if ocean had sunk from beneath them, they pass
To their graves" &c.

The punctuation here is my own. Hitherto the pause has been at "beneath them." I cannot see the sense of saying that "the waterspouts seemed to sustain heaven, *as if* ocean had sunk from beneath them:" but I do see the sense of saying that the waterspouts collapse *as if* ocean had sunk from beneath them."

P. 331.

"The moon arose *up in* the murky *east*."

This is the correction given by Mr. Garnett, on MS. authority, instead of "upon the murky earth."

P. 333.

Orpheus.

"No trace of this poem appears in Shelley's note-books: it exists only in a transcript by Mrs. Shelley, who has written, in playful allusion to her toils as an amanuensis: '*Aspetto fin che il diluvio cala, ed allora cerco di posare argine alle sue parole*'—'I await the descent of the flood, and then I endeavour to embank his words.' From this circumstance, as well as from the internal evidence of the piece, I should conjecture that it was an attempt at improvisation. Shelley had several times heard Sgricci, the renowned *improvvisatore*, in the winter of 1820, and this may have inspired him with the idea of attempting a similar feat."—(*G.*) In Mr. Garnett's *Relics of Shelley*, some lines, duly inserted in our edition, were omitted.

P. 335.

"To picture forth *its* perfect attributes."

I have here substituted "*its*" for "*his*." The latter word seems to be given inadvertently; for the "attributes" evidently pertain to the song of Orpheus—not to Orpheus himself.

P. 336.

To his Genius.

"Shelley's poetry is the idealized representation of Shelley himself. . . . This ideal tendency, gathering beauty with every successive manifestation, finally culminated in the 'radiant mysticism and rapturous melody' of *Epipsychidion*; beyond which, progress hardly seems possible. *Fiordispina*, and the piece which I have ventured to entitle *To his Genius* (using the latter in the sense of δαίμων), may be regarded as preliminary, though unconscious, studies for this crowning work. This is indicated by the general similarity among the three, as well as by the fact that very many lines now found in *Epipsychidion* have been transferred to it from the others. . . . The second [*To his Genius*] . . . was probably the earlier in point of date. *Fiordispina* seems to have been written during the first days of Shelley's acquaintance with Emilia Viviani."—(*G.*) The poem *To his Genius* embodies the whole of that which figures, in the collected editions heretofore, as *Fragment, No.* 1, *To* ——. As *To his Genius* is a confessed fragment, and hardly more fragmentary without than with the lines which were transferred almost *verbatim* into *Epipsychidion*, it has appeared to me the more reasonable course to cut out such lines from the verses now before us, unless necessary to the context.

P. 336.

"I have already dedicated two" &c.

"The *Revolt of Islam*, to Mrs. Shelley: and *The Cenci, to Leigh Hunt.*"—(*G.*)

P. 337.

"A flower which, fresh as Lapland roses are,
Lifts its bold head into the world's *frore* air."

In the *Relics of Shelley*, the word is "pure," instead of "frore." The emendation seems to me internally probable; and Mr. Garnett, on my suggesting it to him, has expressed his concurrence.

P. 341.

To the Moon.

The last two lines of this fragment, here printed, are added from Shelley's own MS.

P. 342.

"And many *pass* it by with careless tread."

Mr. Fleay has pointed out to me that the word should be "*pass*," not (as heretofore) "*passed*."

P. 345.

Prologue to Hellas.

"Mrs. Shelley informs us, in her note on the *Prometheus Unbound*, that, at the time of her husband's arrival in Italy, he meditated the production of three dramas. One of these was the *Prometheus* itself; the second, a drama on the subject of Tasso's madness; the third, one founded on the *Book of Job*—'of which,' she adds, 'he never abandoned the idea.' That this was the case will be apparent from the following newly discovered fragment: which may have been (as I have on the whole preferred to describe it) an unfinished prologue to *Hellas*,—or perhaps the original sketch of that work discarded for the existing more dramatic but less

ambitious version, for which the *Persæ* of Æschylus evidently supplied the model. It is written in the same book as the original MS. of *Hellas*, and so blended with this as to be only separable after very minute examination. Few even of Shelley's rough drafts have proved more difficult to decipher or connect. Numerous chasms will be observed which, with every diligence, it has proved impossible to fill up: the correct reading of many printed lines is far from certain: and the imperfection of some passages is such as to have occasioned their entire omission."—(*G.*)

P. 350.

Fragment lxxiv.

It may be surmised that this song belongs to the *Unfinished Drama*, p. 366, and is an utterance of the "Indian Youth" who cherishes a hopeless passion for the Pirate's Bride. In like manner, *The Isle* (p. 365) may be a song proper to the Bride herself. The passage of her speech at p. 368,

"Over that islet pared with flowers and moss," &c.

suggests this.

P. 351.

"Athwart the stream, and time's monthless torrent grew."

The meaning of the word "monthless" is not wholly clear, and this dissyllable gives an awkward over-length to the line. Mr. Garnett suggests to me that Shelley probably wrote at first "smooth," and afterwards "loud," as a substitute; and that these two consecutive words have been misread as "monthless." That, with such MS. as Shelley's, such a mistake as this is possible enough, is known to the initiated: yet I cannot take upon myself to displace "monthless." My own belief is that it ought to be "mo*u*thless"—the conception in Shelley's mind being this: "Keats's name was 'writ on water'—*i.e.*, on the flood of time, which, as long as it remained in the state of fluid water, was 'mouthless'—did not preserve or utter forth the name: but Death supervened, and turned the water into ice, and the letters of the name, from transitory, into permanent."

P. 351.

Fragment lxxix.

This may be surmised to form a dialogue between a depreciator and Shelley himself—who, modestly rather than accurately, confesses that his laurels are not evergreens.

P. 351.

Fragment lxxx.

I am strongly inclined to think this stanza forms part of the same composition as Fragment xxxviii.; and, if the two were united, one might perhaps treat the lyric as a complete one.

P. 352.

Ginevra.

Mrs. Shelley says: "This fragment is part of a poem which Shelley intended to write, founded on a story to be found in the first volume of a book entitled *L'Osservatore Fiorentino.*"

P. 352.

"A moonbeam in the shadow of a cloud
Were less heavenly fair."

It seems clear that Shelley must have written, or intended to write, "Were"—not "Was," as in former texts. The rhythm of this second line is annoyingly imperfect: which we must set down to the laxity of a first draft.

P. 355.

"Through seas and *winds*, cities and wildernesses."

I don't see much appositeness in this word "winds," and suspect it is a misprint —not improbably, for "waves," or perhaps "strands." The awakening of the earth to a new day is figured as being effected at the call of "the matin *winds*;" these arouse "every living heart which it (the earth) possesses, through (throughout) seas and *waves* (?), cities and wildernesses."

P. 355.

"Their barks are wrecked on its inhospitable shore."

Shelley has introduced into the lines on *Time* (p. 266) a line nearly identical,

"Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable shore."

P. 356.

"All eyes
In which that form whose fate they weep in vain
Will never, thought they, kindle smiles again."

We should all use the phrase "to kindle smiles *in* (not *on*) eyes." I have therefore made this substitution.

P. 357.

"The rats in her heart
Will have made their nest."

Both these lines remain rhymeless. I think Mr. Fleay is almost certainly right in proposing "breast" instead of "heart": for this not only sets the rhyming right so far, but is a more self-consistent statement. In the course of one day after death, the rats might be building a nest in Ginevra's breast, but hardly in her heart. Still, the passage as it has always stood printed possesses a horrible energy and fascination which I cannot bring myself to tamper with. Further, the final line (also at present rhymeless) might perhaps run "she shall *rest*" (instead of "*sleep*.") But, even after these alterations, the lines ending with "night" and "couch" would lack rhymes.

P. 358.

"The lark and the thrush and the swallow *free*."

Perhaps "free" ought to be "blithe," to rhyme with "scythe" in the following line.

P. 359.

"What none yet ever knew, *nor* can be known."

This, allowing for a certain latitude of syntax, makes sense: not so the old reading "*or* can be known."

P. 359.

"Melchior and Lionel."

No doubt these names symbolize Williams and Shelley; the latter of whom is in like wise shadowed forth, to some extent, in the "Lionel" of *Rosalind and Helen*.

P. 359.

"It was that hill whose intervening brow
Screens Lucca from the Pisan's envious eye."

These lines are self-confessing adaptations of the passage in Dante's *Inferno* (canto xxxiii.)

"Al monte
Perchè i Pisan veder Lucca non ponno."

P. 359.

"'What think you, as she lies in her green cove,
Our little sleeping boat is dreaming of?'
'If morning dreams are true, why I should guess
That she was dreaming of our idleness.'"

The natural inference is that these lines form question and answer: asked by Lionel, and answered by Melchior. I have therefore divided them accordingly by inverted commas.

P. 359.

"How it whistles, Dominic's long black hair?"

The verses from this point down to "fasten this sheet—all ready"—are given in our edition from Shelley's own MS. Most of them are altogether new: of some at the beginning the collected editions have hitherto offered a modified version. The Shelleyan reader will, I have no doubt, be glad to see all these fresh-spirited verses; more especially those relating to Eton, which are the only ones in which Shelley recurs to his school-days in the temper of an ordinary schoolboy, unaggrieved and unpreoccupied. The lines which close the poem also present some emendations, on the same MS. authority.

P. 362.

Sonnet to Byron.

This sonnet is given in a fragmentary form by Medwin (*Life of Shelley* and *Shelley Papers*); and a modified version of it, also fragmentary, appears, with the introductory words in prose, in the notebook of Shelley which has passed through my hands. From these two sources I have put together the fourteen lines needed for the sonnet form, and can offer my version to the reader as being at all events less imperfect than the one heretofore printed. But anyhow it can only be treated as a fragment. The concluding words of the sonnet are almost the same as a passage in *Epipsychidion*.

P. 363.

The Zucca.

A zucca (as Mrs. Shelley explains) is a pumpkin. Some verbal alterations and additions are supplied from Shelley's MS.

P. 364.

"Blank as the *sun* after the birth of night."

The word in the MS. may be either "sun" or "sea."

P. 367.

"I have wrought mountains, seas, *and* waves, and clouds."

I have inserted the italicized "*and*" for the metre's sake.—Many readers will no doubt notice that this speech is closely modelled upon the opening speech of Milton's *Comus*.

P. 367.

"And has also led thither a youth."

I have modified this note written by Mrs. Shelley. Her view of the story was that the Lady and Youth had come *together* to the enchanted island; a view untenable even according to the part of the drama which Mrs. Shelley published, and quite inconsistent with other portions now first included in any edition of the poems. Of these portions, the majority are inserted from the *Relics of Shelley*, and the remainder from a transcript made by Mr. Garnett, and never as yet printed anywhere. As regards the "Pirate of savage but noble nature" (p. 366), the reader of Trelawny's *Adventures of a Younger Son* will form his own opinion as to the source whence such a conception arose in Shelley's mind.

P. 368.

"Strewn, by the nurslings that linger there."

This line is imperfect in metre, and the word "nurslings" seems unmeaning. I suspect it of being a misprint.

P. 370.

"Methought a star came down from heaven."

From this point the sequel of the *Unfinished Drama* (save the six concluding lines) comes out of Mr. Garnett's *Relics of Shelley*. He says: "A close scrutiny of one of Shelley's numerous MS. books has revealed the existence of much more of this piece than has hitherto been suspected to exist. By far the larger portion of this, forming an episode complete in itself, is here made public. . . . . The little drama . . . . was written at Pisa during the late winter or early Spring of 1822. The episode [ensuing] was obviously suggested by the pleasure Shelley received from the plants grown in-doors in his Pisan dwelling, which, he says in a letter written in January 1822, 'turn the sunny winter into Spring.' See also the poem of *The Zucca* [p. 363], composed about the same time."

P. 373.

Charles the First.

The great majority of this fragmentary play has hitherto remained unpublished. I have extracted it, not without considerable trouble, from Shelley's notebook; and have been able, from the same authority, to rectify many misprints and gaps in the portion which had previously been published. According to Medwin (*Life*, vol. ii., pp. 164-5) Shelley had a great predilection for the personal character of Charles I., and censured his execution, and had no liking though some admiration for Cromwell.

P. 387.

"A commonwealth like Gonzalo's in the play."

Shelley had written "Gonzaga's." But the allusion is indisputably to a speech of Gonzalo in Shakspeare's *Tempest*.

P. 391.

"Even as my master did," &c.

These lines are given in the *Relics of Shelley* as pertaining to the drama of *Charles the First*. I have not found them in the notebook, and cannot affirm that I am right in here introducing them; but I see no other place for them equally plausible.

P. 394.

Scene V.

This fragment of a scene appears to belong to a much later portion of the drama than those which have preceded; perhaps to the period of King Charles's captivity, or even after his death. The lyric "A widow bird," &c. has hitherto been printed separately, not as forming any part of the drama.

P. 396.

The Triumph of Life.

This poem has peculiar interest, as being the last considerable work on which Shelley was engaged:—See Mrs. Shelley's note to the poems of 1822, p. 292.

P. 398.

"The ghost of *her* dead mother."

I have substituted "her" for "its," in conformity with the diction of all the rest of this clause.

P. 398.

"All the four faces of that Charioteer
Had their eyes banded. Little profit brings
Speed in the van and blindness in the rear,
Nor then avail the beams that quench the sun:
Or *that* with banded eyes could pierce the sphere
Of all that is, has been, or will be, done."

I feel great doubts as to the meaning of this passage, but incline to suppose it is as follows:—"All the four faces of that Charioteer had their eyes bandaged. Speed in the van [the steeds drawing the chariot], along with blindness in the rear [the hoodwinked charioteer], is of little profit: and then (in such case of bandaged eyes] the beams that quench the sun [the brilliant light accompanying the chariot] are of no avail: if otherwise [if his eyes were free], that [charioteer] with bandaged eyes would be able to discern all that is done, or has been, or will be." To mark this sense, I have inserted a colon after "sun," and italicized "*that*." The old punctuation gives no stop at all after "*sun*:" so that the construction appears to run—"Nor then avail the beams *which* quench the sun, or *which* with banded eyes could pierce the sphere of all that is," &c. This, as far as I can perceive, is nonsense.

P. 399.

"Or those who put aside the diadem," &c.

This long sentence is evidently most imperfect. There is no verb to agree with the nominatives "all those who had grown old in power" &c.; and the lines beginning "were there" and "were neither" are—if they have any definite meaning—contradictory the one of the other. Though I cannot venture to introduce it into the text, I would suggest (as I did in *Notes and Queries*) the following as a not unreasonable modification—making sense and grammar of the passage, and presumably representing its general drift:—

"Fled back like eagles to their native noon;
For those who put aside the diadem
Of earthly thrones or gems . . .,
Whether of Athens or Jerusalem,
Were neither 'mid the mighty captives seen" &c.

P. 400.

"And follow in the dance with limbs decayed,
Limping to reach the light."

This passage stands in the original edition of the *Triumph of Life* (*Posthumous Poems*)

"To seek, to . . ., to strain with limbs decayed,
Limping to reach the light."

Subsequent editions give the first line as in our text: and, in the second, substitute "Seeking" for "Limping." It appears to me that the original reading is distinctly the finer of the two. To avoid the hiatus in the first line, however, I adopt the later version of that, but retain "Limping" in the second line.

P. 400.

"And *past* in these performs what . . . in those."

"Past" does not sound like the right word. I suspect it of being a misreading.

P. 401.

"Said the grim Feature (of my thought aware)."

In the original edition, this stands printed—

"Said the grim Feature of my thought. 'Aware,
I will unfold,'" &c.

The emendation (with some others in the *Posthumous Poems*) was made by Mr. Browning, and is a most manifest improvement, though the word "feature" is anyhow strange in this connexion. Is it possible that Shelley carelessly wrote "fantasm" (for phantasm"), and that this has been mis-read as "feature"?

P. 401.

"*Stain* that which ought to have disdained to wear it."

The word has hitherto, in defiance of grammar, been "stained," instead of "stain."—Shelley, when he wrote the *Triumph of Life*, seems hardly to have been so fervent an admirer of Rousseau as he at one time was. In a letter of 12th July 1816 he speaks of *Julie* as "an overflowing of sublimest genius, and more than human sensibility;" and elsewhere he refers slightingly to the French language, "if the great name of Rousseau did not redeem it."

P. 404.

"Which *he* had known before that hour of rest."

"He," *i.e.* "whoso;" "they" is the word inaccurately given in previous editions.

P. 407.

"And, as a shut lily stricken by the wand."

There are several instances of lax metre in this poem. The above is one; a line close below is another,

"Touched with faint lips the cup she raised."

In some instances, a slight emendation suggests itself temptingly. But it is best to remember that, the work being confessedly a fragment, one cannot expect to find its edges smooth.

P. 407.

"The Brescian shepherd."

Mrs. Shelley observes in a note: "The favourite song 'Stanco di pascolar le pecorelle' is a Brescian national air."

P. 409.

"Of him *whom* from the lowest depths of hell,
Through every paradise and through all glory,
Love led serene."

Of course, the word here should be "whom;" hitherto it has been printed "who." Next come the lines

"And who returned to tell
The world of hate and care the wondrous story
How all things are transfigured except Love;
For, deaf as is a sea which wrath makes hoary,
The world can hear not the sweet notes that move
The sphere whose light is melody to lovers."

I feel satisfied that there was a bad misprint here in previous editions, and that we ought to read as above, instead of

"And who returned to tell
The words of hate and care; the wondrous story" &c.

The emendation makes the subsequent reference to "the world" perfectly relevant: and does away with the abrupt, and in its context almost meaningless statement, that Dante, returning from paradise under the escort of Love, and telling "the wondrous story how all things are transfigured except Love," spoke "words of hate and care."

P. 409.

"Across the *tiar*
Of pontiffs."

Clearly "tiar" is here "tiara": therefore mis-spelled "tire" in previous editions.

P. 410.

"Of lawyer, statesman, priest, and theorist."

I quite agree with Mr. Fleay in putting all these substantives into the singular. Hitherto it has been "lawyers, statesmen, priest, and theorist."

P. 410.

"And, like tears, they were
A veil to *those* from whose faint lids they rained
In drops of sorrow."

It appears to me that the diction would be much more natural if we read here "eyes" instead of "those": but there is no authority for such a change.

P. 410.

"Each like himself, and each like other, were."

I have taken the liberty of writing "each like other," in lieu of "like each other." With that old reading, the line is made to contain two grammatical offences—1. "Each were;" 2, "Each were like each other."

P. 410.

"And of this stuff the car's creative ray
Wrapped all the busy phantoms that were there,
As the sun *shapes* the clouds."

The word "wrapped" (spelled "wrapt" in previous editions) seems inapposite. I question whether it ought not to be either "shaped" or "warped."

P. 411.

Translations.

In the respective preceding sections of our edition, the arrangement of the poems has been strictly chronological, so far as known. In this section of Translations, it seems desirable to adopt a different method—the classification according to the languages and authors translated from. Moreover, Fragments are here intermixed amid finished compositions.

P. 411.

Hymns of Homer.

The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt, and the *Shelley Memorials*, show that Shelley did some translations from Homer in 1818, and others about the winter of 1821-22. The fragment of the Hymn to Venus is dated 1818 in Mr. Garnett's *Relics of Shelley*; and the long Hymn to Mercury is known, from a letter to Mr. Peacock, to have been translated in July 1820, just before Shelley wrote the *Witch of Atlas*, in the same octave stanza.

P. 411.

"A Shepherd of thin dreams, a cow-stealing."

I have been tempted to insert *and* after "dreams;" finding it difficult to believe that Shelley would have left the metre as it stands. Soon after, stanza viii., there used to be another defective line,

"And through the tortoise's hard *strong* skin."

Dr. Dobbin has suggested to me "stony" instead of "strong," and I have felt justified in inserting this in the text. This stanza has one line too little; as also stanzas xi., xiv., and liv. To supply these four gaps, Dr. Dobbin proposes four lines, to form respectively the *first* lines of the stanzas:—

"The chequered shell the urchin stripped and flayed."
"On nursery-milk why should he still be fed?"
"Then, sitting down, he wiped the dust away."
"The urchin sped as he would never tire."

P. 419.

"From one side to the other of the *road*,
And with his face opposed the steps he *trod*."

With most versifiers, we might be confident that the word here, for the sake of the rhyme, ought to be "trode;" and so again in stanza lix. But with Shelley one cannot be very sure of this; his ear and pen courted *resemblances*, as well as repetitions, of sound—often apparently by preference. His plan, however, included also the opposite extreme—the actual reiteration of one same syllable, in guise of rhyme; of this we have one more example in stanza xlvii. where "know" is given twice over.

P. 422.

Stanza l.

The gap at the beginning of this stanza is common to all the editions. The "intelligent reader" will divine that an impropriety occurs here in the Greek original.

P. 425.

Stanza lxii.

The rhyming of "wrath" with "untruth" is an ultra-Shelleyan audacity: there is no opening for a suspicion of misprinting.

P. 425.

"Do *thou* defend the young."

Up to this point, Shelley has been consistent in using "you" and its congeners in the *Hymn to Mercury*: from this point, "thou" is intermixed with "you," and mostly predominates.

P. 431.

"It like a *living* soul to thee will speak."

This seems to me clearly correct: not "*loving*," as the previous editions give it.

P. 434.

"Steed-subduing."

Hitherto printed *steel*-subduing.

P. 435.

Tritogenia.

Not Tri*l*ogenia, as in previous editions.

P. 436.

"Unconquerably, *illuming* the abodes.

The metre would scan more obviously if we read "illumi*n*ing:"

"Uncon | querably | illu | mining | th' abodes."

As it stands the scansion must run

"Uncon | querably | illu | ming the | abodes."

I suspect the line is misprinted, but do not venture to alter it. (The authority for these Hymns of Homer, after the one to Venus, is very scanty: they only appear in the collected editions).

P. 438.

"By Jove it is not, for *you* have the trophies!"

"*You*" is freely interchanged with "*thou*" throughout *The Cyclops*. I have only made two emendations in flagrant cases—

P. 444.—"Gave any of *thy* stores to these false strangers!"

P. 447.—"Feasting upon *thy* loved companions now."

I append the date of 1819 to this admirable translation. It *may* have been done rather before 1819: but a letter addressed by Shelley to Leigh Hunt in November of that year (*Essays and Letters*, vol. ii. p. 207) speaks of it as if it were a recent performance.

P. 438.

"And so we sought you, king. We were sailing."

This line wants a syllable. Perhaps we should read "We *then* were sailing."

P. 439.

"In these wretched goat-skins clad."

No rhyme is supplied to this line—probably (as in so many other cases) Shelley's own fault. "Dight," substituted for "clad," would furnish a rhyme: but only to a line a good deal higher up.

P. 440.

"Cyclopes, who live in caverns, not in houses."

Hitherto printed "Cyclops": so also on pp. 442 and 449.

P. 446.

"*Ai, ai!* I have escaped the Trojan toils."

It is clear that the Greek interjectional wail (as in *Prometheus Unbound*, vol. i., p. 350) is here intended: not what previous editions give—the English exclamation of assent or acquiescence, "Ay, ay."

P. 446.

"And thou who inhabitest the thrones."

One is tempted to complete the metre by reading

"And thou *too* who inhabitest the thrones."

But, as observed with regard to the *Triumph of Life*, this translation is confessedly an incomplete work, and to be accepted as such in its printed aspect. Yet I cannot resist the temptation of departing from this rule as regards a line soon after (p. 448), where I have inserted the word in italics—

"Of the huge caldron, and *he* seized the other."

P. 446.

"For your gaping gulf and your gullet wide
The *ravin* is ready on every side."

Ravin has hitherto been printed "*ravine*"—as if it were directly referable to the "gaping gulf" of the preceding line. But it is clear that the word "ravin" is here the same as "rapine, prey, provender," as particularized in the lines which next ensue: and the spelling "ravin" is therefore to be preferred.

P. 447.

"But not believed as being done."

It would be reasonable to complete this line by reading

"But not *to be* believed as being done."

P. 448.

"Of axes, for Ætnean slaughterings."

Shelley confesses (see p. 496) that he "does not understand" this passage. I cannot do better than quote here what Mr. Swinburne says about it (*Fortnightly Review*). "The reading 'four amphoræ,' is a misprint or slip of the pen for 'ten.' The next few words are curiously tumbled together and misconstrued. Shelley has not distinguished the drinking-can or cup (σκύφος) wrought of ivy-wood, or carved round with ivy-leaves, from the ninety-gallon bowl (κρατὴρ) into which the Cyclops had just milked his cows. Read:—

"Then he milked the cows,
And, pouring in the white milk, filled a bowl
That might have held ten amphoræ; and by it
He set himself an ivy-carven cup—
Three cubits wide and four in depth it seemed;
And set a brass pot on the fire to boil;
And spits made out of blackthorn shoots with tips
Burnt hard in fire, and planed in the other parts
Smooth with a pruning-hook; and huge blood-bowls
Ætnean, set for the axe's edge to fill."

"Or; if σφαγεῖα can mean the axes themselves, and γνάθους be read for γνάθοις

'And the under jaws
Of axes, huge Ætnean slaughtering tools.'"

Valuable throughout, this article by Mr. Swinburne is especially rich in details regarding the translation of the *Cyclops*. I have introduced into the text his rectifications of "ten" instead of "four" in the present passage: for others, the reader should consult the article itself.

P. 449.

"You think by some *manœuvre* to dispatch him."

"Measure," which appears in previous editions, must, I think, be a misprint for manœuvre"—which is not only more apposite in meaning, but completes the metre as well. No direct equivalent to either word is in Euripides.

P. 450.

"Happy *thou* made odorous" &c.

In this semichorus I have substituted "thou" for "those;" and again, in lines 6 and 9, "thou" and "shalt" for "there" and shall." Without some such substitutions, the whole thing is a meaningless welter of anti-grammar. Perhaps "village" in line 3 ought to be "vintage." Mr. Swinburne gives the real meaning of the semichorus in the following lines:

"Happy he who shouts his song
To the grape's dear fountain-springs;
For a revel laid along,
Close in arms a loved man grasping,
And on spread couch-coverings
Some soft woman-blossom clasping.
Sleek, with love-locks oiled all o'er,
'Who,' he cries, 'will open me her door?'"

P. 451.

"One with eyes the fairest" &c.

This chorus also is not correctly translated, nor indeed very intelligibly, by Shelley. The reader should refer to Mr. Swinburne's version.

P. 452.

"Ay, you will roar if you are caught in drinking."

I do not understand this line, especially in the mouth of Silenus. The Greek (Dindorf's text) means—

"But you must wipe your mouth to take to drink."

P. 454.

"With sweet Bromian."

Shelley was more likely to write "Bromius" than Bromian": though the latter (the appellative being properly an adjectival epithet) is not exactly wrong.

P. 454.

"We are too *far*."

Μακρότερον: not "too *few*," as in previous editions.

P. 457.

From Moschus.

These have hitherto been headed SONNETS *from the Greek of Moschus*. The first is a sonnet (though not of the strictest construction): the second, consisting of only twelve lines, is not a sonnet at all. I have therefore suppressed this word in the title.

P. 458.

"And thus—to each which was a woful matter—
To bear what they inflicted Justice doomed them:"
For, in as much as each" &c.

Hitherto this has been printed—

"And thus to each—which was a woeful matter—
To bear what they inflicted, justice doomed them:
For inasmuch as each" &c.

With this latter punctuation, the word, "to each" have no true meaning nor syntactical standing. My punctuation yields (though with a rather peculiar inversion) the sense "which thing was to each a woful matter": and that must certainly, I apprehend, have been what Shelley meant. I have written "in as much" in separate words: for here it appears to mean more than "because," and has its full primary force, "to that same degree wherein." This would be more salient if we had "in so much"—which may perhaps be the correct reading.

P. 458.

From Virgil—The Tenth Eclogue.

Hitherto unpublished: transcribed by Mr. Garnett.

P. 459.

"Vanna and Bice *and* my gentle love."

Shelley has fallen into a singular misapprehension here. Bice is simply Beatrice, and is herself, of course, Dante's "gentle love." The literal translation of the Italian runs—"And then Lady Vanna, and Lady Bice, with her who is on number thirty." The latter enigmatic-sounding phrase (not enigmatic to a Dantesque reader) indicates the innamorato of Lapo Gianni. If we were to read "and *his* gentle love," the sense would be correct; and possibly "*my*" is after all only a misprint.

P. 460.

"I said: 'Beneath those eyes'" &c.

The turn given to this sentence by Shelley makes "I" appear to be Dante: but in the original "I" is the same impersonation as "my Spirit" of a few lines higher up.

P. 461.

"My song, I fear that thou wilt find but few" &c.

"This last stanza" (observes Mr. Garnett, from whose *Relics of Shelley* the translated canzone is taken) "was subsequently published as an introduction to *Epipsychidion*"—see p. 76.

P. 461.

"Against the air that, in that stillness deep
And solemn, struck upon my forehead bare
The slow soft stroke of a continuous *sleep*."

This translation from the *Purgatorio* was first printed in Medwin's *Life of Shelley*; afterwards, with some additions and variations, in the *Relics of Shelley*. In the former book, the third line of our quotation runs—

"Like a sweet breathing of a child in sleep."

In the latter book, it runs—

"The slow soft stroke of a continuous."

Dante says nothing about sleep, but about wind—

"Non di più colpo che soave vento."

However, to complete the rhyme and sense after the word "continuous," it has appeared to me reasonable to add "sleep" from Medwin's version.

P. 461.

"Yet were they not so shaken from *their* rest."

I find "*the* rest" in my original (*Relics of Shelley*): but I think Shelley must have meant (if not written) "*their* rest"—which corresponds much more nearly with the original.

"Non però *dal lor esser dritto* sparte."

Soon afterwards I suspect we ought to read

"Bending towards the left *the* grass that grew,"

as in Dante.

P. 462.

"Charms every sense, and makes all thought take wing."

So in Medwin: Garnett's version gives an incomplete line.

P. 463.

Scenes from the Magico Prodigioso of Calderon.

Shelley says in a letter to Mr. Gisborne, 10th April 1822:* "Have you read Calderon's *Magico Prodigioso*? I find a striking similarity between *Faust* and this drama: and, if I were to acknowledge Coleridge's distinction, should say Göthe was the greatest philosopher, and Calderon the greatest poet. Cyprian evidently furnished the germ of *Faust*, as *Faust* may furnish the germ of other poems; although it is as different from it in structure and plan as the acorn from the oak. I have—imagine my presumption—translated several scenes from both, as the basis of a paper for our journal [the *Liberal*]. I am well content with those from Calderon, which, in fact, gave me very little trouble; but those from *Faust*! I feel how imperfect a representation (even with all the licence I assume to figure to myself how Göthe would have written in English) my words convey. No one but Coleridge is capable of this work."

* *Essays, Letters from Abroad*, &c., vol. ii. pp. 274-75.

P. 464.

"Since first I read in Plinius."

It is curious (if true) that this same passage in Pliny was what first set Shelley himself on the track of sceptical speculation. So says Medwin (*Shelley Papers*, p. 6): perhaps the statement arose from a confusion of memory on his part.

P. 464.

"Enter the Demon."

He has hitherto been called "Devil" here, and "Dæmon" ever afterwards. I think it best to stick uniformly to "Demon."

P. 466.

"That which you know best; and, although I *know not*
The opinion you maintain, and though *it be*
The true one, I will take the contrary."

In previous editions, the italicized words in lines 1 and 2 have been printed in lines 2 and 3 respectively. Thus line 1 was made positively unrhythmical, an line 3 redundant. A line coming soon afterwards,

"And *that* you may not say that I allege,"

is Mr. Fleay's manifestly right emendation—the italicized "*that*" being inserted by him.

P. 469.

"And desert cells?
Run, run, for where we left
My master I hear the clash of swords!
I never."

Divided thus, these are two admissible lines of blank verse. Hitherto they have been made into three, all truncated. "I hear," instead of "*we* hear," commends itself to acceptance as the only natural mode of expression if the pronoun is used; the original Spanish gives the same general sense, without the use of *any* pronoun.

P. 469.

"Although my high respect towards *thy* person."

Altered from "*your*." These scenes from Calderon are, as usual, far from consistent in the use of "thou;" but they approach nearer to consistency than some other compositions.

P. 472.

"From yonder clouds even to the waves below."

There is no rhyme to this line; nor to one a little lower down—

"And round its wreck the huge sea-monsters sit."

P. 473.

"I seek a refuge from the monster who
Precipitates *him*self upon me!"

Previous editions give "*it*self," which is inconsistent with "who."

P. 475.

"The expanse of these wide glassy wildernesses."

This line can just be scanned as it stood heretofore (without the word "glassy").

"The ex | panse of | these wide | wilder | nesses."

But this is far from a *natural* way of scanning it. The Spanish says "Esas campañas de vidrio," these champaigns of glass; and so, as the line hitherto printed is deficient not only in rhythmical flow, but in sense as well (for Shelley gives as yet no word indicating "sea"), I think it pretty clear that the epithet "glassy," or something to the same effect, must have dropped by mere inadvertence out of his MS., or out of the printed text.

P. 476.

"'Twixt thee and me be that neither Fortune."

The obvious change of "thee" instead of "thou" is pointed out by Mr. Garnett. The line still remains unmetrical: it could easily be set right, and in more ways than one.

P. 476.

"Be peopled from thy shadowy deep."

Both this line, and another soon afterwards,

"Let nothing meet her ear,"

are left rhymeless. Should we read "thy shadowy *sphere*"?

P. 476.

"My voice, when thy sweet song thou hast began."

So in the original edition: in later editions, "begun." Although "began," as a participle, is open to objection, I think Shelley must have written it advisedly, so as to furnish a true rhyme to "Cyprian."

P. 477.

"So flattering and so sweet."

This correction—"flattering" instead of fluttering"—is given by Mr. Garnett.

P. 477.

"To the trunk thou interlacest
Art the verdure which embracest."

The necessity of rhyme preserves this violation of grammar from emendation. In the first line of the couplet, I suspect we ought to read "*Who* to the trunk."

P. 478.

"For, whilst thus thy boughs entwine."

In this line there has hitherto been the converse violation of grammar—

"For whilst *thou* thus thy boughs entwine."

By missing "thou," the grammar is set right: and, even apart from this motive, I think "thou" is better out than in.

P. 478.

"And Cyprian?—Did I not requite him."

This line is deficient, or at any rate mis-accented, in rhythm; and the word "requite" not very complete in sense. A reasonable alteration would be, "Did I not requite *his love*?"

P. 479.

"Woe is me! I know not where to find him now,
Even should I seek him through this wide world!"

Previous editions give, "*And* woe is me!"—a serious flaw of metre, which I think it quite fair to amend by omitting "and." Perhaps, however, it would be legitimate to amend *both* lines (for the second is as deficient as the first is redundant) by reading

"And woe is me! I know not where to find him
Now should I seek him even through this wide world!"

P. 479.

"Compelling thee to that which it inclines."

"Inclines" here is not entirely right. Perhaps "inclines to" would be correct.

P. 481.

"*Where* secretly the faithful worship."

Common sense, and the original Spanish, make it certain that "where" is the true reading—not "which," as in previous editions.

P. 482.

Scenes from the Faust of Göthe.

Mr. Garnett has obligingly shown me a Shelleyan curiosity in his possession—a literal translation made by the poet, when he began learning German in 1815, from the opening portion of *Faust*, up to where the infernal dog first makes his appearance. It is done as a mere exercise in acquiring the language, and is not perhaps strictly relevant to these notes: but has its interest as showing the then early and chequered stage of Shelley's knowledge of German, and the way he went to work in studying, and will beguile the Shelleyan enthusiast of a smile. I am tempted therefore to extract three passages of moderate length—one sublime, and two familiar.

The Spirit appears in the flame.

"*Spirit.* Who calls me?—*Faust* (*turning away*). Horrible sight!—*Spirit.* Thou hast me mighty drawn forth from my sphere long: and now . . *Faust.* Alas! I cannot endure thee!—*Spirit.* Thou didst implore earnestly me to see, my voice to hear, my countenance to behold. Me bent thy mighty soul-prayer: here am I. What pitiful terror seizes superhuman you? Where is of thy soul the flame? Where is the breast which a world in itself contains, and . . and possesses, which, with joy trembling, swelled as us the spirits' like to rise? What art thou, Faust? That voice to me resounds which itself to me with all its powers urged. Art thou he? who, by my breath round-thundered, in all thy life's depth shook—a cowardly crooked worm!—*Faust.* Shall I thee, Image of Fire, propitiate? I am, I am Faust—I am thy likeness!—*Spirit.* In the flux of life, in the storm of things, proceed I to and fro, move here and there. Birth and the grave, an eternal sea, a changeful web, a burning life, thus provide I for the rushing alternation of time, and work of Deity the living robe.—*Faust.* Who thou the immense world wanderest around, active spirit, how near feel I thee to me!—*Spirit.* Thou resemblest a spirit; then thou comprehendest nothing to me. (*Disappears*).

. . . . . .

Scholar. Lightning-like the vigorous maidens stride. Mr. Brother, come! We must them accompany. A strong beer, a macerated tobacco, and a maid in dress—that is now my taste.—*Town Girl.* There see to me now handsome lads! It is really a shame! Company can they the all-best have, and run these maidens to.—*Second Scholar.* Not so quick! Far behind come two who are enough pretty to attract. It is my neighbour thereby: I am maidens to see fond. They go with their still step, and draw us yet from to the end with.

. . . . . .

Faust. Seest thou that black dog, the corn and stubble near?—*Wagner.* I have seen him long already: nothing important he to me seems.—*Faust.* Consider him well: for what holdest thou the beast? *Wagner.* For a shock-dog which, to his manner, himself at the heels of his master plagues.—*Faust.* Mark you how in far circles he round us here and ever nearer hunts? And err I not—so draws he a whirl-

pool of fire to his path behind him.—*Wagner.* I see nothing but a black shock-dog; it may by you well a deception of sight be.—*Faust.* To me appears it that he magic low snares to the fifth band round our feet draws.—*Wagner.* I see him uncertain and timorous to us upspring, while he near, his master two unknown sees.—*Faust.* The circle will close: already is it near.—*Wagner.* Thou seest, a dog and no spectre is there. He gnarls, and hesitating lays himself on his belly: he wags his tail—of all dogs the custom.—*Faust.* Accompany thyself to us—come here!—*Wagner.* It is a blundering foolish beast. Thou standest still—he waits too: thou speakest him to—he struggles to thee only on: loose what—he would it bring, after thy stick in the water would spring.—*Faust.* Thou hast well; I find not the step of a ghost, and all is . . . *Wagner.* With a dog, when he well pulls, will himself a wise man weigh. Yes, thy affection desires he quite and entirely; he of students the most excellent scholar.

P. 483.

"Thou *tookest* not my visits in ill part."

Editors are a hard-hearted race. None had hitherto had sufficient pity on Shelley to alter "tookedst" into "tookest."

P. 483.

"No, Lord; I find all there, as ever, bad at best."

This very anomalous line must, I think, be an oversight. I should conjecture that Shelley at first wrote "at best" (which does not correspond to any expression in the German original); and then, observing the line to be imperfect, introduced "as ever" (which *is* in the original), intending to cancel "at best," but presumably omitting to fulfil that intention. Such omissions are frequent in his MSS.

P. 488.

"The trunks are crushed and scattered."

It seems clear that Shelley must have intended to rhyme, in this passage, "scattered" with "shattered." Hitherto, "shattered" has been printed twice over.

P. 490.

"Come with us, come with us, from Felsensee!"

Mr. Garnett notifies the correction "Felsensee" instead of "Felunsee." In point of fact, "Felsensee" is not a strict proper name, but means "the Lake of Rocks, or Rocky Lake."

P. 493.

Parvenu.

To the name of this personage Shelley or some one else appended as a note (in *The Liberal*) "A sort of Fundholder." No such explanation is given in the German *Faust* in my hands: and it seems hardly worth "making a note of." Perhaps it was put into *The Liberal* as an editorial sly hit at English affairs.

P. 495.

"To-night I shall make poor work of it."

This unmetrical line would be set right were we to read

"To-night I shall *but* make" &c.

P. 496.

"It is as airy here as in a . . . ."

Shelley has mistaken "lustig," jovial, for "luftig," airy. The original means "It is as jovial here as in the Prater." This is by no means the only misapprehen-

sion that can be detected in the translation from *Faust*, which is none the less a masterpiece.

P. 498.

Appendix.

For some general remarks on the compositions comprised in this Appendix, see my preface, p. xiii. It includes, beside merely juvenile writings, some others of an outlying kind—variations from the printed text of the poems, lines in Latin and in Italian, &c. I add here a list of the sources whence the several items have been culled:—

From *Hogg's Life of Shelley*. Verses on a Cat: Death, a Dialogue; Death Vanquished; The Tear; Love; Bigotry's Victim; To the Moonbeam; To a Star; Love's Rose.

From the *Shelley Papers*. Fragment.

From *Medwin's Life of Shelley*. Latin Verses, the Epitaph in Gray's Elegy; Latin Verses, In Horologium; Fading; The Wandering Jew; From Calderon's Cisma d'Ingalaterra; Ugolino, from Dante; Epithalamium; Buona Notte.

From *St. Irvyne*. Victoria; Sister Rosa; The Lake Storm; Bereavement; St. Irvyne's Tower; The Father's Spectre.

Copied out by Mr. Garnett. The Solitary; To ——; The Recollection, omitted Passage. Also verses on a Fete at Carlton House, which Mr. Garnett has taken down from the mouth of the Rev. Mr. Grove, a relative of Shelley.

From the *Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson*. The compositions beginning with that heading, down to Melody to a Scene of Former Times.

From an unpublished correspondence by Shelley, seen by myself. To Mary, who died in this Opinion; Mother and Son; the Mexican Revolution; to Ireland.

From Mr. Browning's recitation. A Hate-Song.

From the *Alastor Volume*. The Dæmon of the World, conclusion.

From *Garnett's Relics of Shelley*. Mont Blanc, cancelled passage; to William Shelley, cancelled passages; Julian and Maddalo, fragments; Ode to Liberty, cancelled passage; Epipsychidion, cancelled passages; to Emilia Viviani, commencement of a second stanza; Adonais, fragments; Hellas, fragments.

From the *Collected Editions*. Singing; Prometheus Unbound, variation.

From Shelley's MS. book. The Indian Serenade, lines apparently belonging to that poem.

The titles given to the juvenile poems are supplied by myself, in most instances.

P. 498.

Verses on a Cat.

This is the earliest known effusion of Shelley, and very far from being the worst. Its exact date is uncertain, but would appear to be somewhere towards 1800, in which year the poet completed his eighth year. It is preserved in the autograph of his sister Elizabeth, "with a cat painted on the top of the sheet; it seems to be a tabby cat, for it has an indistinct, brownish-grey coat." The final phrase "hold their jaw" was then, as Miss Shelley notices, "a favourite one of Bysshe's."

P. 499.

Fragment.

Medwin describes this as "one of Shelley's earliest effusions;" adding, "it was indeed almost taken from the pseudo Rowley."

P. 499.

The Epitaph in Gray's Elegy.

I have corrected some manifest blunders in these Latin lines, and also in those which follow, as printed by Medwin: for instance, "*Longivus*" (instead of

"*Longius*") stanza v.] Medwin presumes the Epitaph to have been "probably a school-task."

P. 500.

Victoria.

Captain Medwin says that some of the poems introduced into Shelley's juvenile romance of *St. Irvyne*, of which this is one, were "written a year or two before the date of the romance." I have assumed that the poems to which this observation applies are those which have no direct connexion with the story of *St. Irvyne*. These therefore I date 1808; the residue 1809, in which year that unspeakable work of fiction was probably written (*published* in 1810). "Three of them," says Medwin, "are in the metre of Walter Scott's *Helvellyn*, a poem he greatly admired, although the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* was little to his taste."

P. 505.

Fading.

This is a song in the early poem on the Wandering Jew, written by Shelley and Medwin: see notes, vol. i., p. 473. The succeeding few lines (headed *The Wandering Jew*) are also referred to by Medwin (*Life of Shelley*, vol. i., p. 58) as if they were Shelley's.

P. 511.

Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson.

See the Memoir, p. xlviii. as to the poems constituting this series. Mr. Hogg says that he and Shelley made the poems purposely absurd by various processes, "especially by giving them what we called a dithyrambic character, which was effected by cutting some lines in two, and joining the different parts together that would agree in construction, but were the most discordant in sense." I must confess that I have been unable to trace in the poems a single clear instance of this process; and, having had to transcribe the whole of them, I have necessarily given to their verbal minutiæ an amount of attention which other readers do not, and certainly need not, vouchsafe. The opening poem in the volume is omitted from our edition, because Mr. Hogg affirms that it was not Shelley's own work, but "confided to him by some rhymester of the day."

The name Fitzvictor, as pertaining to a supposititious nephew of Margaret Nicholson, was an invention of Shelley's; not more extravagant, however, than the name which her son did really adopt for a change, Daphne. Margaret attempted to kill George III. with a knife. A publican at the corner of Clare Market had in his window, "within the memory of a literary friend" (if we may believe the *Gentleman's Magazine* for March 1869), the announcement: "To be seen within, the *fork belonging to the knife* with which Margaret Nicholson attempted to stab his Majesty George III."

P. 517.

"It is *not* the Benshie's moan on the storm."

It seems clear that "not" ought to be inserted in this line: and I therefore introduce it.

P. 519.

The Tear.

Shelley forwarded these verses to Hogg on 6 January 1811, saying in his letter: "You see the subject of the foregoing; I send it because it may amuse you." He "had been most of the night pacing a churchyard." The reader of the present day will not perhaps find the "subject" very self-evident.

P. 522.

"Revenge does not howl *for* the dead."

In Mr. Hogg's book the word is "*to*," not "*for*," I presume a misprint. The poem, if that is the proper word for such a performance, was written by Shelley when he conceived himself outraged by the intolerant bigotry of his family, and especially by its influence on his sister Elizabeth.

P. 523.

Verses on a Fête at Carlton House.

See Notes, p. 599. This is the sole now known fragment from a poem of about fifty lines which Shelley wrote and printed on a fête which had taken place towards the beginning of the summer of 1811. A stream of water had been made to meander down a long table: and the extravagance of the affair generally had excited some murmurs. Shelley, it is said, "amused himself with throwing copies of the poem into the carriages of persons going to Carlton House after the fête."

P. 524.

To a Star.

Shelley sent this to Hogg along with the succeeding verses, *Love's Rest*; saying—"I transcribe for you a strange *mêlange* of miscellaneous stuff which I wrote by the candlelight soon last night." It is not quite clear whether the two compositions are to be understood as consecutive or connected.

P. 525.

To Mary, who died in this Opinion.

Shelley sent this poem to Miss Hitchener from Keswick on the 23d November 1811, saying: "I transcribe a little poem I found this morning. It was written some time ago, but, as it appears to show what I then thought of eternal life, I send it." I do not know who Mary was: possibly the same person who is referred to in the phrase "the vile female who destroyed Mary"—which phrase occurs in a letter from Shelley to Hogg dated the 8th May 1811, printed in Hogg's *Life*, vol. i., p. 270.

P. 526.

Mother and Son.

"The subject is not Gentlemanly" says Shelley on the 7th January 1812, writing from Keswick. "It is worthy of observation that this effusion, which bears traces of a Wordsworthian influence, was finished when Shelley was in habits of intercourse with Southey.

P. 528.

The Mexican Revolution.

These verses, and those which follow, *To Ireland*, were sent by Shelley in a letter from Dublin. He says: "Have you heard a new republic is set up in Mexico? I have just written the following short tribute to its success. . . . These are merely sent as ornaments in the picture of my mind on these two topics. I find that I sometimes can write poetry when I feel, such as it is."

P. 530.

Feci.

This poem is extracted by Mr. Garnett from a MS. book, and had never yet been published. He notes its date as not later than 1813. I have put 1811 conjecturally.

P. 532.

The Devil's Walk—Conclusion.

See notes, vol. i., p. [illegible].

P. 531.

Singing.

The reader will observe that the first two lines of this snatch of verse were utilised by Shelley in the *Prometheus* (vol. i., p. 347).

P. 532.

A Hate-Song.

Mr Browning has favoured me with this amusing absurdity, retailed to him by Leigh Hunt. It seems that Hunt and Shelley were talking one day (probably in or about 1817) concerning Love-Songs; and Shelley said he didn't see why Hate-Songs also should not be written, and that he could do them; and on the spot he improvised these lines of doggrel.

P. 532.

"Father, our woes so great were *yet* the less."

The word given in Captain Medwin's book is "not" instead of "yet"; the direct contrary of what Dante says.

P. 537.

Epithalamium.

Of this variation of the *Bridal Song* at p. 677 I am enabled to give two versions. The first is from Medwin's *Life of Shelley*; which informs us that "during the Spring he [Williams] had written a play, taken from the interweaving of two stories in Boccaccio; and Shelley had assisted him in the work, and supplied him with an Epithalamium for music—since incorrectly published, and which I give in its original form." Then follows, in Medwin's book, the version which stands the first of the two in our Appendix. The second I have extracted, by permission of Mr. Trelawny, from the very MS. play of Lieutenant Williams, still extant. It is entitled—*The Promise; or a Year, a Month and a Day*. The three forms of the poem have substantial diversities. I almost think that the *Bridal Song*, in the body of the poems, is the least interesting of the three: the others, at any rate, are more marked in form, and indicate better the purpose for which the poem was written.

P. 537.

"Lest eyes see their own delight."

Medwin gives "*let* eyes see" &c. Clearly it ought to be either "Lest eyes see," or "Let eyes not see."

P. 539.

Buona Notte.

See *Good-Night*, p. 260. It might be inferred from Medwin's account that Shelley wrote these Italian verses first, and *afterwards* turned them into English: but the evidence of dates negatives that. They are not in very correct Italian, either in idiom or in rhythmical flow: one blunder in the lines, as printed by Medwin, has been corrected by me from the original MS. in Shelley's notebook.

P. 543.

To Jane—The Recollection. Omitted Passage.

The MS. of this poem gives the stanza published in the body of our text, followed by a figure for a further stanza, which is represented by asterisks only. The poem must nevertheless be accepted as a complete composition.

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